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EDITORIAL

OPEN SEASON ON MEESE

Democratic senators opposed to President Reagan's nomination of Edwin Meese 3d for Attorney General are looking for smoking guns in the armory of privilege that Meese has built for himself in his years of public service. There are favorable mortgages, loans from friends, human rights slurs and jobs for cronies that carry the whiff of gunpowder and bear careful inspection. But there are much heavier reasons to disqualify Meese, and they have to do with the dangerously repressive policies he pursued in California, as Governor Reagan's chief of staff. Consider three of his greatest hits:

§ "Project: Safer California" proposed a vast array of metaconstitutional devices for managing social and political protest: suspension of due process, mass arrests, mass trials and preventive detention. Fortunately, Jerry Brown succeeded Reagan and abolished the office that was supposed to implement the $3.8 million project.

§ "Cable Splicer" was a series of workshops Meese promoted to develop a joint military/police command to counter civil disturbances. Reagan addressed a session of 500 military men, police officers and corporate executives, and reportedly "joked" that his critics now had proof he "was planning a military takeover."

§ "Project Search" was the master plan Meese pushed for public control: a memory bank of arrest (not conviction) records, hooked into a state—and later national—advanced telecommunications network. The F.B.I. adopted the plan after the California trial run.

As Attorney General, Meese would oversee the F.B.I., the criminal justice establishment and the national surveillance system. He is in line for a Reagan appointment to the Supreme Court. But a look at his California record inspires the worst fears that individual liberties will be sacrificed to military and police practices.

CHERNENKO'S GENERATION
Stephen F. Cohen

PAX SYRIANA
Stanley Reed

BEYOND EDB
Fred Powledge

GEMAYEL'S DECLINE
N. Hovsepian

PRIVATE DAMS
Scott Ridley

HUGO'S POEMS
Don Bogen

SOUTHERN HISTORY
Nell Irvin Painter

WHY I'M FOR JACKSON

THE REALITY BENEATH THE RAINBOW

This is the second in a [illegible] comments by members of The Nation *[illegible]ial board on the candidates and issues in th[illegible]ection year.*

—The Editors

PHILIP GREEN

I should perhaps begin this appeal to *Nation* readers to support Jesse Jackson by saying "As a Hymie myself . . ."

There are two salient considerations about the 1984 election. First, it is absolutely necessary to defeat Ronald Reagan, for reasons too numerous, too awful and too obvious to bear rehearsing. Second, for the first time in a half-century there is a movement on the electoral landscape that promises to reshape our politics by bringing into play the needs, wishes and interests of millions of voters and potential voters who heretofore have felt that their deepest political desires would always be frustrated or ignored.

That movement is the Rainbow Coalition. Its Presidential candidate and its inspirational leader is Jesse Jackson. But at this moment, both the immediate program of retiring Ronald Reagan and the longer-run hope for fundamental political change are profoundly endangered by events of the past few weeks. The prospect before us is one that all progressives must think about carefully as we contemplate our responses to the potential derailment of Jackson's campaign because of the furor touched off by a *Washington Post* report that he used an epithet for Jews.

The worst that can happen frequently does, and in this case the worst is particularly grim. If Jackson's campaign continues to falter and the enthusiasm of his supporters is replaced by a

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LETTERS.

LERNOUX 'SPLENDID'

Albuquerque, N.M.
Penny Lernoux's "The Miami Connection" [*The Nation*, Feb. 18] is splendid. All her writing is marvelous, and the fact that she is *The Nation*'s Latin America correspondent is a stroke of luck for all of us. I wish that everyone would read her books, *In Banks We Trust* and *Cry of the People*. Also, I wish a lot of people would consider the question at the end of her most recent article: "Have so many principles been sacrificed to greed and *Realpolitik* that the nation is in spiritual ruin?"

Thomas Smiley

ANOTHER, VIBRANT MIAMI

Miami
I have lived and worked in Miami since 1977. Penny Lernoux is right: there are serious problems, not the least of which is poverty and unemployment among blacks and Seminoles, which both Federal and state governments ignore.

But there is another side. Once upon a time Miami was a suburban cluster with high life on the beach. Today's migrants have introduced a vitality that is visible in Calle Ocho and Little Haiti. The atmosphere is like nowhere else in the United States; the cosmopolitan blend of New World cultures has considerably enriched our lives.

What Lernoux so well describes is thankfully below the surface. What one immediately notices is a vibrancy that flourishes in Miami despite the racketeering.

O.R. Dathorne

BATISTA'S LEGACY

Berwyn, Ill.
"The Miami Connection" is an excellent piece of investigative journalism. It was like reading the obituary of a city. While the Administration apparently expects us to fear communism, Cuba and Castro, it was Castro who gave the boot to the corruption of Batista. If we needed any evidence of pre-Castro corruption, it is certainly evident in Miami. The crime syndicates that had ties to gambling interests in the Batista regime are the same ones that now operate in southern Florida; drug dealing is rampant; laundering of drug profits is an accepted practice; and Cuban exile terrorist groups and the C.I.A. work hand in hand.

Why are we expected to fear Cuban communism because of the proximity of that tiny island and at the same time ignore the far greater evil that has made a cesspool of a once-beautiful resort city? That evil is not Cuban communism. It is the personal profit and greed that once flourished in Batista's Cuba and now has taken root in Miami.

Shirley DeWine

THE ANTICOMMUNIST BRIGADES

Camas, Wash.
Penny Lernoux has given us the "straight dope" about the dope traffic in Miami and the role of the Cuban exile community in it. Her revelations are, however, nothing that readers of the alternative press have not known for a long time. What she does reveal is the substantial involvement of the "respectable" South Florida business community in the narcotics trade and in money laundering.

The involvement of the Cuban exiles in the narcotics business, and their connection with anticommunist terrorism, has its analogue in the growth of similar activities among some Indochinese refugees. In a fascinating exposé—which he did not follow up—columnist Jack Anderson accused former South Vietnamese dictator Nguyen Cao Ky of being the godfather of an evolving Vietnamese exile terrorist group. The reason for the existence of this group is said to be to finance a comeback by anticommunist forces in Indochina. Like the Miami Cubans, the Indochinese exiles have used anticommunism and its popularity in the United States as a cover for their criminal and terrorist activities. Many of the Indochinese exiles are using their military and paramilitary training in their operations, much as the Cubans have.

One of the great scandals of American life is the role of anticommunist refugees in criminal and terrorist activities in the United States. The mainstream media ignores the existence of paramilitary training camps and the intimidation of American citizens by these groups. From time to time exposés such as that by Lernoux open the situation to public inspection. Unfortunately, the relatively limited circulation of magazines like *The Nation*, *Inquiry* and others keeps the sordid truth from becoming widely known.

Frank W. Goheen

BLOODLESS BROTHERS

New York City
The March 10 editorial "Jackson Brothers" states that Jesse Jackson "makes demands about class, race, privilege and power," and that he will be challenged and attacked because he is black. If we do not heed the demands of Jackson, it is not because he is black but because he is a hypocrite. The general patterning of blacks in our society is not the issue in this case; the moronic, tactless, dishonest comments of a specific man *are*.

As for his "brother" Michael, I hope a man who undergoes cosmetic surgery to look more white will not stand as a symbol of black transcendence. If that is how Michael chooses to "leap the wall beyond his role," he does not jump very high.

Jessica Hornik

ROLL, GANGES, ROLL

Putney, Vt.
In Bernard McCabe's review of the first volume of E.M. Forster's letters ["E.M. Forster's Longest Journey," *The Nation*, March 3], he seems to agree with the editors, Lago and Furbank, when they quote a letter with the phrase "by the tide of Ganges do complain" and connect it (a malappropriate use of Forster's injunction) with Psalm 137:1.

Forster and Marvell would be astonished, to say nothing of the Psalmist. In fact, there is a double reference in Marvell, for while his coy mistress is by the Indian Ganges's side, the poet "by the tide of Humber would complain." The folk in the Psalm were not mildly complaining, they were *weeping* by the rivers of Babylon.

This is just a complaint and a weeping by the tide which is overwhelming allusion.

Edith West

NO HOPE FOR FLESCH

Arcata, Calif.
The piece of garbage on Bob Hope by Hugo Flesch is horribly insensitive ["Bob Hope Plays Armageddon," *The Nation*, Feb. 11]. This mockery of someone who brought a little life and humor to "Joe Sixpacks" in Korea and Vietnam is, like Edward Sorel's grotesque antipapal cartoon ["Vatican Issues Sex Guidelines," *The Nation*, Dec. 17, 1983], another manifestation of the increasing insensitivity of the liberal mandarin elite toward not only the needs but also the simple human sensibilities of the average working-class American.

Little wonder, then, that Reagan took working-class voters by simple default. The least *The Nation* can do is print a public apology to Bob Hope and his people.

Peter Bretnall

A 'SNIDE PORTRAYAL' OF POZNER

Southampton, N.Y.
I write to protest Michael Massing's snide and obnoxious portrayal of the Soviet commentator Vladimir Pozner ["The New Soviet Media Man," *The Nation*, Feb. 4], which is a part, it seems to me, of the magazine's consistent tendency to depict the Soviet Union in an unfavorable light.

Massing strongly suggests that Pozner is a sort of Soviet Sam Slick, whose task it is to beguile gullible Americans by putting the best face on Soviet life while asserting that we Americans know better than to believe Pozner's defense of the "evil empire." I hope *The Nation* will, in the interest of mutual understanding, undertake a more balanced presentation of Soviet policy.

Alden Whitman

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EDITORIALS.

Prayer Power

More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of, and although Tennyson had his own poetic take on that issue, President Reagan understands better than anyone what politics may be made with folded hands, murmuring lips and lowered lids. His appeal for prayer in the schools is, so far, the centerpiece of his re-election strategy. It galvanizes his conservative constituency, intimidates his liberal opponents and deflects such unpromising issues as unemployment and nuclear war from intruding on the electoral debate.

Reagan is helped immeasurably by the confusion of his critics, who take the prayer campaign solely as an attempt to deregulate the separation of church and state and to establish an official religion. The arguments they derive from such a vision, however worthy, are couched in constitutional terms and appeal to the Jeffersonian conscience which liberals hope is lurking in the mind of the modern majority. Senator Lowell Weicker, the Connecticut Republican who is leading the fight against the Administration's amendment, bases his case on the theory that the imposition of any moment of meditation in a public school is a denial of freedom of speech and religion. It is a theory that might win in the Supreme Court (the *old*, pre-Nativity Supreme Court),

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but it misses the political point of the current confrontation.

This is not, after all, merely a replay of constitutional conversations that took place in Philadelphia 200 years ago. The prayer proposal is a leading part of a wider campaign to subvert the humanistic culture that characterizes America in the twentieth century much more than it did in the eighteenth. It is this year's symbol of the New Right's attack on modernism, secular democracy, egalitarianism and personal liberation. It is profoundly reactionary in its assault on history, and it is perfectly political in its organization of power against an appeal to reason.

Prayer is hardly horrible. Nor does a bit of mumbo jumbo in the morning lead a nation into blind obedience to hooded priests and an unseen God. Britain, which has suffered its own state religion and compulsory school prayers since Tudor times, is the most atheistic nation in the world. Italy, with the Pope and his retinue in its midst, produced the West's biggest Marxist party. Obviously the opiate has lost its punch.

No one, not even Jesse Helms, believes that prayer in public schools will make much of a difference by itself. Most kids will hardly notice the minute of silence squeezed in between the last toke in the schoolyard and the food fight in the cafeteria. Those in the better public institutions who may take prayer seriously will soon have to translate the King James words into BASIC or FORTRAN in order to glean their meaning; and all for nought, because the Deity is notoriously unresponsive to bits and bytes. Many more will be permanently alienated from religion when they discover that, as Sister Mary Ignatius tells her students in Christopher Durang's delightful play, "God always answers prayers, but sometimes the answer is no."

God, in one form or another, is easily exploited as the answer to the problems of modern life. "A whole lot more of Jesus and a lot less rock-and-roll" was the country music prescription a few years back. What's most disturbing about the current campaign, however, is that it is embodied in a powerful movement to impose intellectual and cultural hegemony on the whole society. The New Right agenda not only includes compulsory prayer; it demands compulsory militarism, compulsory surveillance, compulsory pregnancy-to-term, compulsory heterosexuality, compulsory sobriety, compulsory racism, sexism and imperialism. And the campaign against that movement must be waged in terms appropriate to its political message, for the target is the right and its power, its politicians and its patrons. There's a cultural war on, and it will not be won by lawyers and logic alone.

Re: Raza Kazim

For those who monitor human rights violations throughout the world, the sheer number of offenses—arrests without charge or trial, cruel and degrading punishment, torture—can be numbing. Yet it would be a moral crime to let the fact of widespread disappearances and murder by death squads blind us to individual cases.

The recent disappearance of Raza Kazim of Lahore, Pakistan, is an alarming case in point. On January 9 the well-known international lawyer was abducted from his home by armed men wearing civilian clothes and traveling in military vehicles. Kazim's family and friends, who have not been informed of his whereabouts, the identity of his abductors or the charges against him, believe the men were from military intelligence. Pakistani newspapers have reported the arrest; the government has not denied it. Nevertheless, the government refuses to accept necessary medication from Kazim's physician. A writ of habeas corpus filed on his behalf in January remains unanswered. Appeals from the Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights, as well as hundreds of telegrams generated by Amnesty International's Urgent Action Network have failed to elicit a response. Unpleasant rumors as to his fate abound.

The United States, which supports Pakistan with $525 million annually in military and economic aid, has shown callous indifference to the case. It seems loath to admit that since the suppression of the remarkable civil disobedience movement last fall [see Iftikhar Ahmad, "Satyagraha Comes to Pakistan," *The Nation*, November 26, 1983], human rights violations in Pakistan have begun to follow the familiar pattern of brutality characteristic of Latin America and elsewhere. Quiet diplomacy, so vigorously invoked by the Reagan Administration, has not yielded even basic information about this illegal abduction. It seems that the enormous amount of aid provided to Pakistan is not sufficient "leverage" with which to move our ally in South Asia. Private and Congressional requests to the State Department have been answered with evasions and excuses rather than substantive action. Apparently the Secretary of State has forgotten the letter of U.S. law governing the disposition of foreign aid, which reads in part: "No assistance may be provided . . . to the government of any country which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, including torture, . . . prolonged detention without charges, or other flagrant denial of the right to life, liberty and the security of person." Surely, Kazim and others like him deserve the protection that this law was intended to provide.

Pax Syriana

Strange as it may seem, President Hafez al-Assad of Syria may be sorry to see the United States pull up stakes in Lebanon. While it lasted, Syria's confrontation there with the United States and Israel did wonders for Assad. After nearly ten years of isolation he could play the role of champion of the Arab cause. He could present himself to his people and the outside world as something besides the author of murderously repressive domestic policies. His eight-year occupation of Lebanon with a 50,000-man "peacekeeping" force suddenly seemed worthwhile.

The withdrawal of the marines and the scrapping of the

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May 17 Lebanese-Israeli accord, which Assad condemned as a separate peace with Israel, have changed the game. Syria has replaced the United States as the outside power with the unenviable task of persuading the warring Lebanese factions to work toward national reconciliation. It is a position Assad will find a good deal more taxing than that of naysayer, which he has enjoyed since the Israeli invasion. But he made a good start last week by persuading Druse chieftain Walid Jumblat and Shiite leader Nabih Berri to drop their demands for President Amin Gemayel's resignation.

Assad's quick move to help retain Gemayel indicates how wrong American assessments of Syrian motives in Lebanon have been. We have heard over and over that the marines were in Lebanon to prevent Assad from setting up a radical regime there. But an independent leftist Lebanon is the last thing he wants; it would be too difficult to control. Now that Gemayel has paid proper homage to Assad by agreeing to cancel the May 17 accord, he seems a worthwhile counter to the Lebanese left.

The key to understanding the Syrians' attitude toward Lebanon lies in their notion that it is a part of Syria, separated by French colonial authorities, who wanted to create two weak states. Indeed, since independence in 1946 the Syrians have been riven by almost as much feuding and factionalism as the Lebanese, and they see that events in Lebanon affect them intimately. In fact, Beirut is usually a hotbed of anti-Syrian intrigue. But the Syrians are more powerful and can easily interfere in Lebanon. They are concerned as much with what they don't want there as with what they want, and what they don't want is a Lebanon dominated by any group—left, right, Moslem or Christian—unresponsive to their interests. Assad first invaded Lebanon in 1976 when his supposed friends, the P.L.O. and the Lebanese left, appeared on the verge of vanquishing the feudal oligarchy. Assad was appalled by the prospect of a radical state that might have outflanked him.

Now that Assad has established his ability to determine events in Lebanon, he can afford to pull some of his troops out of the country. The Syrian experience there has not been a happy one. Until the Israeli invasion bailed him out, Assad's domestic critics were calling Lebanon "Assad's Vietnam." From 1976 to 1982 the Syrians fought against every party to the conflict, appearing to the world not as peacekeepers but as a brutal and inept army of occupation. Exposure to Lebanon's endemic corruption has also had a debilitating effect on Syrian military discipline: the main activity of the troops these days appears to be smuggling contraband into Syria.

The Syrians' attitude toward the P.L.O. is oddly similar to their view of Lebanon. They like to consider themselves the leading supporters of Arab unity and the Palestinian cause, and that focus helps distract them from their domestic divisions. But Assad views an independent Palestinian movement with a strong leader like Yasir Arafat as a threat. Last year we saw to what lengths Assad would go to control the P.L.O., exploiting the rift between Arafat and his military commanders and besieging the Palestinian leader in savage fighting around Tripoli, Lebanon. Among Arafat's sins were his various hints that he might be willing to talk peace with the United States and Israel.

Ironically, Assad's triumph in Lebanon has not bolstered his always shaky power base at home. His recent heart trouble has opened the dangerous question of succession. Damascus has witnessed shows of force in muscle-flexing shoot-outs between Assad's brother Rifaat and a group of military commanders who think Rifaat's reputation for repression and corruption should bar him from the top job.

There is no question that Assad dealt the United States a severe defeat in Lebanon. His stubbornness provoked the Administration's prolonged shelling of Lebanon, which has hurt U.S. credibility. Moreover, Reagan's "strategic cooperation pact" with Israel throws doubt on America's ability to act as an impartial broker between the Israelis and the Arabs.

Does that mean Soviet influence is on the rise in the region? Not necessarily. Although the Russians are mounting a massive military assistance mission to Syria, the Syrians have a great measure of control over the relationship; Damascus is Moscow's only foothold that matters in the Arab world. The Russians have little or no influence over Syrian policy, and Assad's attack on Arafat was only the most recent example.

STANLEY REED

Stanley Reed is a writer who specializes on the Middle East.

FOOTNOTES TO HISTORY

By conferring a posthumous National Medal of Freedom on Whittaker Chambers, President Reagan again invites us to look at our history. Just who was telling the truth when Chambers helped launch and legitimize the Red hunt with his 1948 accusations against Alger Hiss and, by extension, the generation of New Dealers he symbolized?

The last legal word on the Hiss case was the July 15, 1982, opinion of Federal District Court Judge Richard Owen, declining Hiss's *coram nobis* petition to set aside his thirty-four-year-old conviction for perjury. The higher courts refused to overturn Owen's opinion, and so the matter stands.

Now, however, a publication is available that documents no fewer than 114 factual errors in Judge Owen's twenty-five-page opinion. As author William A. Reuben, who has literally footnoted Judge Owen's opinion, writes in his introduction, "The claims of history [should] not be permitted to rest solely on . . . inexcusably careless, error-riddled and irresponsible findings." Readers interested in reviewing this final round in the Hiss case should send for "Footnote on an Historic Case: *In Re Alger Hiss*, No. 78 Civ. 3433" (for details, see advertisement on page 320). Reuben is co-plaintiff with Hiss in a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit, sponsored by the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, to obtain documents on the Hiss case.

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Rainbow

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

sense of loss and betrayal, it will not be only Jesse Jackson who suffers. At that point significant numbers of people in a politically revitalized black community—the Rainbow Coalition's most potent contribution to the Democratic Party—might well conclude that regardless of how or why, the first time a black person became a serious Presidential candidate, "they" (the white media, Jews, white leftists) turned on him or deserted him in the crunch and made certain that his campaign failed. That scenario leads to an all-too-plausible conclusion: black voters sitting on their hands rather than jamming the polls in November. And that would mean a defeat for any Democratic candidate. At the very least, regardless of this election's outcome, if white liberals switch decisively to George McGovern or Gary Hart, leaving Jackson with only a black base of support, the possibility of a viable rainbow coalition will be foreclosed for at least another generation; this country will continue to alternate between conservative destructiveness and liberal stasis.

Of course, the most likely winners of the Democratic nomination are far preferable to Reagan. But even Hart, with all his talk of the "party of the future," is only an intelligent liberal who has adapted himself to the conservative agenda. Any such Presidency could be only a stopgap.

The facts are simple. Since the death of Franklin Roosevelt, the Democratic Party has won a majority of the popular vote in only two of nine Presidential elections, one time handsomely, by Lyndon Johnson; the other by Jimmy Carter, a man progressives would once have thought of as a rather decent liberal Republican. Besides Jesse Jackson, no Democratic candidate gives the faintest hope of permanently reversing the decline in the fortunes of the party or of liberalism or of anything to the left of that.

As for McGovern, the most obvious alternative for progressives, he is certainly a decent man who is "correct" on most issues. But issues are secondary to what politics is about, especially in a time of crisis. Primarily, politics is about consciousness and action: how we change the one by engaging in the other. Reagan understands that well. A vote for McGovern is a vote neither for mobilizing action nor for changing consciousness. It is a vote for nostalgia, a confirmation that for many on the left, true happiness can be attained only by losing. Jackson's campaign, however, is not about adopting other people's agendas or being correct or losing honorably. He is trying to mobilize the unmobilized to change their lives. A vote for him would not be "thrown away." It would be an expression of determination and hope, and a clear-cut signal to those excluded people who are looking for that signal.

But . . . as a Hymie myself, I cannot evade the obvious issue, nor should anyone. Four things must be said. The first is that Jackson is not an anti-Semite. Anti-Semites intend derogation and do not apologize for it. He has made his apology clear and that issue ought to be settled, regardless of how much we wish he had confronted and settled it sooner. One apology per error is exactly as many as is required. Thus we must join him in protesting what he calls the "hounding" of the media pack. It's worth remembering that there's only one candidate in the Democratic race who identifies Jews as a specific element of his constituency in almost every campaign speech he makes. That candidate is Jesse Jackson.

Second, the response of certain Jewish organizations and their spokesmen to the Jackson campaign has been contemptible—and I do not speak here of the Jewish Defense League. It is impossible to forgive Nathan Perlmutter and Hyman Bookbinder, who have the chutzpah to tell us what Jackson's positions and statements mean to "the Jews," when thousands of us Jews consider those positions and statements not only sensible but vitally in our interests. Who elected Perlmutter and Bookbinder to speak for Jews? Who made them the judges of what is "good for the Jews" and "bad for the Jews"? Such self-appointed spokesmen for Jews have stereotyped us; they do that more than anyone else in this day and age, and thus they have become our own worst enemy.

Third, Jackson's most serious error—and it is not yet clear that he is aware of it—is to take the Perlmutters and the Bookbinders at their word when they claim to speak for American Jewry. In doing so he imitates their kind of stereotyping, identifying a Jewish this and a Jewish that when he is talking only about this person or that organization. They do it with malice aforethought; he does it out of naïveté and habit. However, though we expect no better from them, we must expect better from him. A leader takes on responsibilities, and this leader's responsibility is to learn not to make the kind of stereotyping statements that endanger the movement he leads. That is his obligation to the Rainbow Coalition.

Finally, and above all, white members of the coalition have an obligation too. It is, first, an obligation to understanding. As a black colleague has written, "Jewish and other white supporters of Jackson's programs and goals are now in the position that black Americans have been in for decades, i.e. forced to assess the importance of a candidate's policies while conceding the candidate's shortcomings. Blacks have never had the choice of a white Presidential candidate who stood unequivocally for black aspirations and who was not without some taint of racial antagonism or insensitivity. Coalitions across racial lines are burdened by three hundred years of history."

Out of that understanding we must make our commitment clear. White progressives must demonstrate that we are serious about social transformation, that in the pithy words of Ronald Reagan, we intend to stay the course. One could say that it's an obligation we owe Jesse Jackson for coming forward when leadership was needed, to face what he knew would be more harassment and death threats than visit any other candidate. But that is not quite the point. If we want to change the shape of the future, it is an obligation we owe ourselves. □

Philip Green is Sophia Smith Professor of Government at Smith College and author of The Pursuit of Inequality.

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SOVIETICUS.

STEPHEN F. COHEN

A historic political and human drama lies behind the selection last month of 72-year-old Konstantin Chernenko to succeed Yuri Andropov as Soviet leader. The Stalinist generation of officials—men in their 70s whose careers began in the 1930s—is making a defiant last stand against the ravages of age and against an eager successor generation.

The Politburo that chose Chernenko, the oldest man ever to become General Secretary, reflects the Soviet political system today. It is divided between representatives of the Stalinist generation and a younger cohort whose obvious candidate for the top post is 52-year-old Mikhail Gorbachev. Despite having buried two aged leaders, Leonid Brezhnev and Andropov, within fifteen months, the old men prevailed again. Chernenko, who was passed over after Brezhnev's death, in November 1982, won this time because he was their only plausible candidate, the last septuagenarian with the necessary credentials to be General Secretary: full membership on both the Politburo and the Secretariat.

But the choice of Chernenko ramifies far beyond the Politburo. Septuagenarians linger in many top posts throughout the Soviet system—in the economic ministries, foreign policy establishment, provincial party organizations, academies, cultural bureaucracies and editorial offices. Gorbachev's victory would have signaled their imminent retirement, while Chernenko's renews their hope of resisting the ambitions of their younger deputies. That essential message was conveyed to the nation during Andropov's funeral (which was also Chernenko's coronation), as state television focused on three other Politburo septuagenarians: Premier Nikolai Tikhonov, 78; Defense Minister Dmitri Ustinov, 75; and Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, 74.

Attention must be paid to the saga of this extraordinary political generation, which clings to office as though to life itself. It acquired its survival instinct early. Shaped by the great tragedies and triumphs of the Stalinist 1930s and 1940s, its leading officials rose with blood on their hands and heroic national achievements to their credit. Young, poorly educated and inexperienced, they were thrust into important positions throughout the system as Stalin's mass terror swept away their predecessors. (By their early 30s, for example, Chernenko was already a regional party boss, Ustinov a full minister, and Gromyko Ambassador to the United States.) Surviving both World War II and another wave of Stalin's terror, they played a major role in defeating Germany, rebuilding the Soviet postwar economy and making the Soviet Union a superpower. By the 1960s they had become the ruling elite, from Moscow to the provinces.

Such experiences made these men zealous defenders of their historical role and political status, and anxious opponents of any fundamental change. Brezhnev, who became General Secretary in 1964 at 57, was their true generational leader. Repudiating Nikita Khrushchev's anti-Stalinism and capricious personnel policies, which had offended their sensibilities and threatened their tenure, Brezhnev embraced their slogan, "Stability in Cadres." In practice, it meant that ranking party and state positions became lifetime bureaucratic peerages, a policy that produced today's geriatric elite.

But challenges to that elite's right to rule until death were already audible in Moscow when I was living there in 1976. Junior officials recalled privately that Lenin had come to power at 47; Stalin's wartime government had been among the youngest in the world; and Khrushchev had been deposed at 70, ostensibly because of his "advanced age." Opinion was widespread that Brezhnev, enfeebled and almost 70, should retire. A defiant retort came from Brezhnev's deputy on the occasion of his own seventieth birthday: "In our country, 70 is considered only middle-aged." Some Muscovites quipped, only half in jest, "They intend to live to be 140!"

They cannot, of course. Andropov needed kidney dialysis treatment within three months of taking office, and Chernenko's health is dubious. Scores of their generation's luminaries have passed from the scene in the 1980s, their heroic services solemnly recited by the survivors in a steady stream of obituaries. Indeed, by design or necessity, the generational transition quickened under Andropov. Supervision of administrative and economic affairs passed to the younger cohort in the Politburo and the Secretariat, while perhaps as many as one-fifth of the provincial party secretaries were retired. Moreover, all signs indicate that Chernenko's election was the result of a generational compromise in the Politburo, with Gorbachev made the number two man. With or without Chernenko's blessing, power will soon pass to younger officials throughout the system.

That generational change will be historic, but will it change Soviet policy? Some observers argue that because the younger officials are better educated, more pragmatic and less traumatized by the Stalinist past, they will be more reformist at home and accommodating abroad. The argument has merit, but it is too simplistic.

Every political generation everywhere is divided over the burning issues of its time; each produces its own friends and foes of change. Upcoming Soviet leaders will be no different in that respect. Indeed, they are likely to be fully united only on the issue of maintaining the nation's superpower standing, including military parity with the United States, which they will inherit. Nor has the Stalinist generation been reckless with Soviet power in the nuclear age. Survivors of terror and war, these men have understood, perhaps better than most of us, history's capacity for sudden disaster. Will their successors have such caution?

Younger Soviet leaders will be different in one important respect. Unable to claim credit for any of the nation's historic achievements, they will have to seek their own. If American policy greets them with reason and restraint, they may well seek that generational destiny in reform at home rather than expanded power abroad.

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

Who He?

The press is using words like "enigmatic" about Gary Hart as he shoots up the charismagraph. He doesn't seem very enigmatic to me. I think he represents a substantive political position and not the fuzziness of mere novelty. He is the Democratic echo of Reaganism and the Reagan economy, what used to be called an Atari Democrat before Atari attracted melancholy associations. He is Reaganism by other means, and perhaps far more palatable to the swing voters who could never stomach Mondale.

He opposes price controls, and voted for the deregulation of natural gas prices. He opposes domestic-content auto legislation, which sets him against old industry, big labor and Rust Belt reconstruction à la Rohatyn. Domestic content legislation would, after all, push up the price of cars, leaving less consumer money to buy home computers and other new commodities of the service society. He advocates a tax on consumption, a supply-sider notion which favors investment and which would mightily please *rentiers*, bankers and the new Reagan class discussed below. Bankers always like to ration the scarce good that they monopolize, the scarce good in question being finance. Rust Belt reconstruction in the industrial heartland would take finance that old capital (the banks) would much prefer to invest in new industries. Hart is thus the logical candidate of capital in both its oldest and newest guise—the banks and Silicon Valley.

Hart's support for "military reform" fits into the picture neatly. The military reformers want a better bang for the buck. An old-style liberal looks at a weapon and laments that it kills people. A military reformer looks at the same weapon and says that it costs too much to make and doesn't work very well. For all his attacks on Pentagon waste and inefficiency Hart still calls for a real increase in defense spending. His famous "small" aircraft carriers would cost as much as the big ones. His position on arms control is so sloppy you need a mop to get it off the floor.

He's got the energy industry, the electronics industry and the banks behind him. Looks like the bow wave of the future to me, a postmodern version of the New Frontier.

Perception Frenzy

The election industry is alive and well. The first sentence of David Broder's column in the March 4 *Washington Post* Outlook section said it all: "The Democrats have a race on their hands. We have a wonderful story to cover. . . ." The next day Broder was rushing ahead to the finish line; he began his front-page news story on the Maine results with "Sen. Gary Hart (D-Colo.) won the Maine Democratic presidential caucuses tonight, dealing a serious and possibly fatal blow to the prospects of Walter F. Mondale."

The perception of Hart as a winner was so strong last week that you could practically touch it. These rapid swings are the dynamic of the modern election industry. In the old days the rhythm of a political campaign was a bit like equally old-fashioned mutual-orgasm theory: foreplay, gradual and increasing excitation of the voters culminating in a satisfactory terminal ejaculation of opinion in the voting booth. In the computerized, mass media bouts of today, the prolonged and perpetual polling-cum-perceivograms insure that discrete moments in a campaign are commodified in a game of freeze-frame false consciousness. The consumers (once known as voters) of the mass media election barrage interact with pollsters and other perceivers in a game of highly self-conscious hide-and-seek. The election "process" becomes exactly like a video game, the candidate trying to insure that he is traveling across the screen just at the moment when the consumer elects to press the button.

Mondale vs. the 'New America'

You can't deny that history likes its little jokes. Big labor, in the form of Lane Kirkland, signs on as co-conspirator in the Kissinger commission's schemes for counterrevolution and continued imperial exploitation in Central America; a few weeks later Walter Mondale, the candidate of big labor, is humiliated in the New Hampshire primary. It's far too early to say—even before superprimary day on Black Tuesday—but it looks as though the voters may be sensing that "Mondalism" is not the recipe to stabilize American capitalism in the 1980s.

"Mondalism," after all, is merely the recipe that worked during the postwar boom, which Mike Davis describes in an interesting essay in the latest *New Left Review* (Disclosure Alert! I'm a member of *N.L.R.*'s editorial committee): the "Fordist" model, sustained by military expenditures, imperial extraction and the satisfied complicity of organized labor. This is the whiskered ideological coalition currently being led by Mondale, just as it was led by Edward Kennedy in 1980. The trouble is that the coalition is not apt for the political economy of the 1980s, otherwise known as Reaganism, and nicely described by Davis: "The old charmed circle of the poor getting richer as the rich get richer is being superseded by the trend of poorer poor and richer rich as the proliferation of low-wage jobs simultaneously enlarges an affluent market of non-producers and new bosses." Or, nouveau poor, nouveau rich and big capital, the last two united in an attack on wages, unionization and welfare expenditures. Welcome to a world where there will be a million American millionaires by the end of 1984: a world where, as *New Left Review* puts it, "professional, executive and specialist categories now comprise a quarter of the work force, flanked by swarms of franchise operators, medical entrepreneurs and real estate speculators."

This is the "new America" of old Ronald Reagan and of young Jack Kemp and of young Gary Hart: an America made new again with deregulation, tax breaks otherwise known as tax expenditures, and the shrinking of New Deal/Great Society America.

Jackson and His Slur

Form and custom demand that at least one Democrat speak to the disenfranchised, the have-nots, the underclass, the wretched of the earth—in other words, the electoral can-

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

non fodder which has to be marshaled briefly at the polling booths in November to propel the consensus candidate into office. This was to be the role of Jesse Jackson, given media sanction to animate the masses with his Baptist eloquence, register them wherever possible and then take a back seat to a "serious" candidate.

Well, not only had Jackson been doing rather more than that, overstepping his role in fact, but then he had to go and make opprobrious racist slurs, the stupid schwartze. Now, Jackson's use of "Hymietown" and "Hymie" was racist speech which should be condemned every time, anytime. What does seem odd to me is that the "ethnic slur" has become practically the only connecting rod between politics and morality so far as the liberal opinion-forming elite is concerned. Without undue perturbation this elite tolerated the agricultural policies of Earl Butz—policies which induced the starvation of large numbers of people in the Third World—until he was rash enough to make his tight-pussy/loose-shoes remark in front of John Dean. James Watt was a monster, polluting and pillaging, yet he was regarded as acceptable until he made a remark which in and of itself hardly warranted his eviction from government.

President Reagan's policies are racist to the core, causing misery, deprivation and shortened lives for poor blacks, beyond all others. But he would be in serious trouble as a racist only if he matched words to deeds and called them "worthless niggers." At least Menachem Begin matched the motion of his lips to the movement of his tanks and called Palestinians "two-legged beasts"; his Chief of Staff, Gen. Rafael Eitan, likened them to "drugged roaches," and in neither case did the slur seem particularly to distress polite opinion here.

None of which excuses Jackson for his Hymie-talk, but they sure were lying in wait for him, were they not? Newspapers that have been racist in their hiring policies, racist in their coverage, racist in their newsrooms, racist in their accounting departments, clambered up their high horses, hitched him to a rope and dragged him round the ring. He should not have afforded them the opportunity, which does not in the least vitiate the hypocrisy of the entire spectacle.

Footnote: Anyone wanting a quick dose of anti-Semitism could do worse than get the new edition of *ADC Issues*, "Cruel and Unusual: Negative Images of Arabs in Popular American Culture," by Dr. Laurence Michalak. It is a booklet put out by the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, 1731 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 400, Washington, D.C. 20009.

Amazing New Reagan Lie

He's always had problems but now Reagan seems utterly unable to distinguish between fact and fiction. In the March 5 *Washington Post* Lou Cannon reported an amazing spasm of lying by the old boy. Last November 29, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir visited the White House, where Reagan told him *inter alia* that he had been in a U.S. Army unit assigned to film the Nazi death camps. Years later, he said, a member of his family questioned the truth of the Holocaust. "This is the time for which I saved the film," Reagan said, "and I showed it to a group of people who couldn't believe their eyes. From then on I was concerned for the Jewish people."

Shamir's account of this conversation appeared in *Ma'ariv* for December 6. His spokesman confirmed it to *The Washington Post*. On February 15, Reagan told the same story to Simon Wiesenthal and Rabbi Martin Hier.

But Reagan never even went to Europe during the war. Now the White House version is that while making a training movie in Hollywood during the war, Reagan saw early footage of the death camps and kept a copy, which he showed to "a Jewish friend" two years later who had questioned the Holocaust. Cannon, who has followed Reagan for years and written two biographies of him, notes that he had never heard either story. There's a sort of majesty to this brand of mendacity. So Gary Hart lied about his age and the circumstances of his name. Big deal.

The New York Times seems curiously eager to maintain Reagan in his fantasy world. On the front page for February 18 it published a picture showing the President arm-wrestling in the Oval Office. The caption read, "TEST OF STRENGTH: President Reagan overpowering Dan Lurie, the body builder, in an arm-wrestling match." Thus *The Times* was cozily complicit in a bit of flummery designed to show Reagan as a titan of physical fitness.

The Executive Class

The new managing editor of *Foreign Affairs* is Peter Grose, who has been on the staff of the Council of Foreign Relations since 1982. Grose was a reporter for *The New York Times* for fourteen years and a member of its editorial board for five, until he became deputy director of policy planning in Cyrus Vance's State Department. He stayed there for a year. Also in Vance's State Department was the once and former *New York Times* national security correspondent Leslie Gelb. Gelb headed the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs. His post at *The Times* was taken by Richard Burt, who joined the Reagan Administration as . . . director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs. Grose's predecessor as managing editor of *Foreign Affairs* was James Chace, who is working for *The New York Times Book Review*. All this has the *appearance* of being a very fundamental reality.

It's a Man's World

"Women Add a Certain Pizazz to Portugal's Politics." That was a headline in *The New York Times* for February 24. "Woman's Touch Helps History Shape Annapolis." That was a headline in *The New York Times* for February 28. Someone should ask the headline writers to join the late twentieth century.

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ARTICLES.

BEYOND EDB

Dereg's Deadly Diet

FRED POWLEDGE

Americans have traditionally displayed a monumental trust in the water they drink, the air they breathe and the food they eat. The assumption has been that those necessities of life are clean, that they are abundant and that any variation from the usual high levels of quality and quantity is only temporary. But in the last few years, our trust in each of those staples has been shattered. Now it is food's turn. We don't know whether a pot of rice or a package of cake mix will poison us.

The current furor over EDB, or ethylene dibromide, a pesticide commonly found in grain products and many fruits, is made all the more unsettling by the Environmental Protection Agency's failure to act decisively in the public interest once state investigators—notably those in Florida—found dangerous levels of the carcinogen in foods sampled from grocery store shelves. The E.P.A.'s inaction on this, coupled with its passive stance on acid rain, casts considerable doubt on the legitimacy of the agency's rebirth under administrator William Ruckelshaus.

The EDB scare is just the most striking and recent indication that the security of our food supply has been violated and that the entity we have charged with protecting it, the government, has been doing an inferior job.

Government—more correctly, governments, although the one in Washington has the most money and authority to oversee the nation's $300 billion-a-year food business—is supposed to watch out for dangers like EDB, as well as for short-weighting, the nutritional value of school lunches, antitrust activity within the business, what can and can't appear on a label, and the myriad additives, both chemical and economic, that go into the food we buy before we buy it.

The Federal government's ability to affect the quantity, quality and variety of food Americans eat is staggering. One count by a government agency found a total of 359 Federal programs that are related to food, agriculture or nutrition. No one knows the total number of rules and regulations that apply to food. Among the government's most visible actions are the following:

§ It collects and publishes statistics which are used by industry and by all sorts of government and private agencies to justify all kinds of programs.

§ It writes and issues regulations which have far-reaching effects.

§ It supports and performs research in thousands of areas related to food, from the development of new strains of plants and animals to studies of farm efficiency and new forms of fuel.

§ It tries to keep the production of various commodities orderly and secure by regulating quantity and producers' income. It heavily endows the dairy and fishing industries. More than $8 million of the taxpayers' money was poured into an effort to rename "trash fish" so the public would buy and eat them.

§ It controls to some extent the global commerce in food. Often it uses food as a lever in foreign policy.

§ Not the least of its undertakings relates to the nutrition of the most vulnerable Americans—the young, the elderly and the impoverished.

At times the government has even engaged in deep thinking about what the structure and future of the agricultural system should be. But more often its involvement in the food industry is at the intricately detailed level, as exemplified by what used to be known as the Food and Drug Administration's "filth guidelines." Now designated as guidelines on "natural or unavoidable defects in food," they set the limits of filth that processors can allow in the nation's food. The guidelines are violated, for example, by the presence of more than sixty aphids, thrips and/or mites per 100 grams of frozen broccoli; more than five drosophila and other fly eggs, or more than one maggot, per 250 milliliters of canned citrus juice; more than an average of *either* ten fly eggs, or five fly eggs and one maggot, or two maggots, per 100 grams of tomato juice; and more than five milligrams of "mammalian excreta" per pound of sesame seeds.

The food industry benefits in many ways from the actions and inactions of government at all levels, but the greatest payoff comes from agricultural research. Under the present system the government uses the taxpayers' money to subsidize research that helps private industry—through developing new and more marketable strains of plants and animals—but penalizes the public by raising food prices and lowering quality.

Agricultural research has been supported by government since the Department of Agriculture was created in 1862, and the total bill is well over $400 million a year. Research money is funneled through six agencies of the U.S.D.A., fifty-eight state agricultural experiment stations, ten schools of forestry, seventy-two land-grant colleges and Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. The General Accounting Office estimates that those organizations do 95 percent of all agricultural research supported by the public. Untold related research is done by agencies not directly connected with agriculture, such as the Defense Department and the various spy organizations. Much of what we know today about food packaging and preservation, for example, is

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Fred Powledge is the author of eleven books. This article is excerpted from his latest, Fat of the Land, *to be published in April by Simon & Schuster.* *Copyright © 1984 by Fred Powledge.*

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the outgrowth of work done on developing combat rations in World War II.

Research is not only supposed to make contributions to the agricultural *business*; it is supposed to help solve the broader problems of agriculture, to elevate rural life and to improve the welfare of the consumer. There are many within the research establishment who think it serves the consumer nicely. "We figure that part of our function is to be part of the education system," said Robert Learson, the director of the technology laboratory of the National Marine Fisheries Service in Gloucester, Massachusetts. And Michigan State University economist James Shaffer bristled at the suggestion that government-funded research benefits industry more than the public. "I think that's a terrible mistake in terms of view," he said. "The Department of Agriculture and the state departments of agriculture should have been known as 'departments of consumer benefits.' The bulk of their emphases has been in terms of improving the supply of food, which has benefited mostly the consumers. The research and the know-how have increased the average yield of corn about one bushel per acre per year for fifty years. That is a tremendous contribution. Who benefits? That hasn't made a lot of farmers rich, but that's made relatively inexpensive meat."

Research does not, however, do nearly enough either to educate consumers or to ease their financial burden. Much of the work done by the Gloucester fisheries laboratory seeks to bolster an industry that is disintegrating because of inefficiency, and a lot of the consumer "benefits" include new ways to mince, extrude or otherwise compromise the quality of fish that consumers eat. And it is by no means certain that increased yields always benefit the consumer.

When researchers at the University of California at Davis, the largest and richest agricultural experiment station in the nation, used public money to perfect both a machine to harvest tomatoes and a succession of genetically engineered tomatoes that fit the machine (UC-82, one of the latest, is thick-skinned, juiceless and square, perfect for everything but eating), the rationale was that the cost of labor would be reduced and the savings passed along to the consumer. That has not occurred. Elizabeth Martin, director of the Davis-based California Agrarian Action Project, said her organization kept its eye on prices and found that in the first fifteen years after the machine was introduced in California, "tomato prices had risen 111 percent to the consumer." She added that "no other fruit or vegetable had even gotten close to that rise in price."

"The university is not gearing its research toward a consumer constituency," said Martin, who has a degree from U.C. Davis in environmental policy analysis. "Rather, it gears its research toward wherever it can get grant money. And the people giving them the grant money are almost entirely the chemical industry, the big machinery companies and the commodity groups.

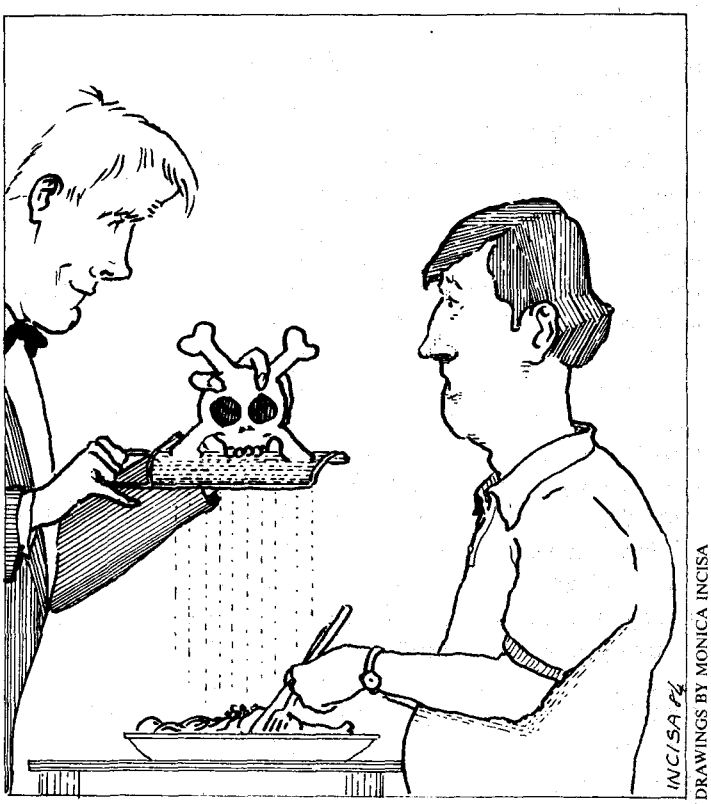
"There's a lot of very *good* stuff happening at the university," she continued. "But the greatest amount of innovation is coming out of the sections of the university that are doing research off large business grants and catering to large business needs." Privately supported research subsidized by the taxpayers, according to the California auditor general's office, has benefited Dole, 3M, Hunt-Wesson, the Pet Food Institute, the Monsanto Fund, Heinz and the Pistachio Association, among others.

Not only did the University of California's researchers use Federal and state money for the benefit of food and chemical conglomerates, they also meekly let the industry call the shots. One letter from a private company, with names withheld by the auditor general, made the relationship clear:

> [Company] wishes to award a gift for the amount of $20,024 to cover the total project cost of construction of a prefabricated greenhouse unit. It is agreed by [company] that the greenhouse facility will be the property of the Regents of the University of California and will be managed by and assigned to the [university department] upon completion of construction. Further, it is agreed that the [company] representative, [name of a company employee], will have a courtesy university appointment and in general will use the greenhouse for three years in conjunction with the [department] with provision for extension of use by [company] for an additional two years in cooperation with [department's] use.

The state reported that the company got its employee his appointment while keeping him on its payroll; he did his research, which "centered around a specific interest of his employer"; the company gave money to the experiment station; and the taxpayers' university continued to do the work of industry.

The election of 1980 put a pro-agribusiness and pro-industry President in the White House. Ronald Reagan had



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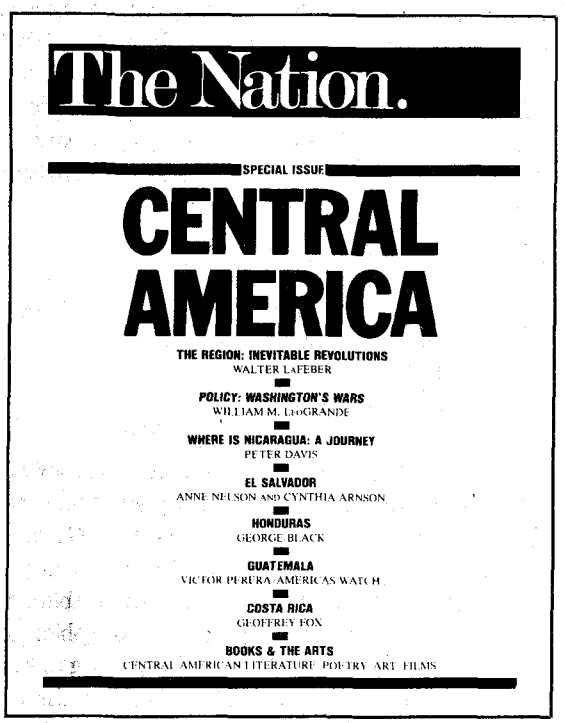
CENTRAL AMERICA IN BULK



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been Governor of California while industry was getting nice subsidies from the state university system. A prominent member of the university's Board of Regents at that time, as well as a director of the parent company of Blue Goose Growers, which owns farmland and eleven packing houses in California and elsewhere, was Reagan's friend William French Smith. Smith went on to become Reagan's Attorney General. As director of the Justice Department, he had a strong hand in formulating the nation's policy on issues of the fair marketplace. Not surprisingly, the government in Washington, which has been the most tenuous of the consumer's friends even in the best of times, now often acts like an avowed enemy.

One year after Ronald Reagan became President, a coalition of seven national consumer organizations issued a joint report condemning his policies on food, safety, health and energy as "devastating." At the time, a press spokesman for Reagan commented that his boss "believes that much Federal regulation is wasteful and unnecessary and that the consumer's best protection is not a growing Federal bureaucracy but a free and competitive economy."

Of course, the consumer organizations were not asking for a growing bureaucracy but rather a government that was committed to doing its job. Reagan's ideas about how to foster a "free and competitive economy" were exemplified by the appointments he made to Federal offices concerned with food and other consumer affairs. Those appointments paralleled the patently pro-polluter ones Reagan made in the environmental area. He filled many positions in the Department of Agriculture with people who knew little and cared little about consumers, much less consumerism; they were people who represented the world of business, who felt comfortable with business's way of thinking, who saw nothing wrong with the way business had been conducting itself. They were people who were not disturbed by the word "conglomerate"; some had worked for conglomerates. The word that bothered them most was "regulation."

Reagan named John R. Block, a hog farmer and Illinois Director of Agriculture, to head the U.S.D.A. Block quickly broadcast his pro-business opinions in a series of interviews with reporters from the trade press. He wanted to spend more money on agricultural research, he said, and less on food stamps, school lunches and nutrition. "Consumers need to be concerned about keeping research up so that this agricultural plant can be in a position to continue to serve them in future years with an abundant supply of food and fiber at a reasonable price," he said. Block and Reagan installed C.W. McMillan, a lobbyist for the National Cattlemen's Association, as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Marketing and Inspection Services, and Richard Lyng, president of the American Meat Institute, as Deputy Secretary.

It did not take that team long to get to work implementing the Administration's policy of discarding, defusing and rewriting regulations. The changes since January 1981 have been many and frequent, and all of them have injured consumers economically and nutritionally while enriching the giants of the industry. What follows is only a brief sample.

Sanitation in the meatpacking industry has long been a

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problem area, as has the quality of the inspections carried out by Federal and state officials. Although millions of Americans might think a U.S.D.A. Inspection stamp on a cut of beef or a package of pork chops is assurance that the meat was processed under the cleanest conditions, several investigations have found this to be false. In one of them, a 1981 study by the General Accounting Office, the auditors made surprise visits to sixty-two meat and poultry slaughterhouses in six states. Sixteen of those plants "were not in compliance with one or more of the six basic inspection program requirements," according to the G.A.O.

Another survey, conducted by the U.S.D.A., showed that some meat products from 32 percent of the 272 plants checked probably didn't meet Federal standards, even though U.S.D.A. inspectors had been giving the plants "satisfactory" ratings. That information was pried out of the department in 1982 by *The Kansas City Times*, via the Freedom of Information Act. In some cases, the paper reported, meat contaminated with fecal matter had been approved by inspectors.

Against such a background, the Reagan Administration announced in 1982 that it wanted to cut the number of meat and poultry processing inspectors by half, leaving more of the responsibility to plant managers. And slaughtering inspectors would be expected to do their work faster: chickens, for instance, would pass by their eyes at the rate of 105 a minute. Under such circumstances, inspection becomes worse than meaningless, for consumers continue to believe that the U.S.D.A.'s stamp of approval on a piece of meat means it has been inspected.

In the area of nutrition, the government under Jimmy Carter had been moving toward a new role, that of helpful adviser to the public. Washington had always been good at producing pamphlets urging people to consume the basic, important foods, but then it began exploring matters that raised the hackles of the meat, chemical and dairy lobbyists.

The explorations grew out of the publication, in February 1977, of "Dietary Goals for the United States," a document aimed at consumers, which represented the judgment of the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs. The report suggested the consumption of more fruit, vegetables and whole grains, and less salt and refined and processed sugar, as well as less saturated fat, fatty meat, whole milk, eggs and other foods containing large amounts of cholesterol. The Senate report, while reflecting the prevailing thought of moderate-minded nutritionists, thus managed to strike at virtually every high-powered pressure group in the food industry.

As the 1980s began, several government agencies were spreading the word of the new recommendations to citizens. The Food and Drug Administration's publication *FDA Consumer* carried lively and sometimes provocative articles on such subjects as vegetarianism ("Vegetarians as a group may be a whole lot healthier than the rest of us," it reported), vitamins and roughage. The U.S.D.A. moved to implement some of the guidelines through its school lunch and breakfast programs; it demanded a lower percentage of fat in ground beef, lighter syrup in canned fruit, less salt in canned meats and restricted access to junk foods.

The biggest bombshell came, however, with the publication of a number of booklets by the U.S.D.A.'s Human Nutrition Center, which put out the guidelines in a form useful to consumers—recipes and menus. A booklet titled "Food" was a particularly attractive and useful departure from the standard fare of government pamphlets which show smiling cartoon families dressed in clothes from the 1940s and gathered around Mom in her apron at the dinner table.

Another publication, almost pocket-size and titled "Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans," offered condensed information and spread the government's message succinctly on its cover:

1 Eat a Variety of Foods
2 Maintain Ideal Weight
3 Avoid Too Much Fat, Saturated Fat, and Cholesterol
4 Eat Foods with Adequate Starch and Fiber
5 Avoid Too Much Sugar
6 Avoid Too Much Sodium
7 If You Drink Alcohol, Do So in Moderation

"These are fairly conservative guidelines, relative to what *some* people wish had been said about some of these things," said Betty Peterkin back in early 1981. She was a scientist at the Human Nutrition Center and was proud of her role in getting the guidelines before the public. When I visited her, she handed me a copy of the pamphlet and suggested that I take good care of it. "This is going to become a collector's item very fast," she said, "because the new Administration is probably not going to reprint it."

Although the pamphlet was reprinted, the new Administration did its best to undercut its message. It proceeded to dismantle the Human Nutrition Center and undertake other efforts to make sure nutrition would not rear its ugly head in Washington again. The Reagan-Block-Lyng forces attempted to change beef-grading regulations to please the meat lobby; to cut nutrition programs for low-income pregnant women, infants and young children; and to rewrite the rules for the school lunch program. They had to back down a few times, once as a result of the public outcry over a U.S.D.A. official's proposal that ketchup and pickle relish be counted as vegetables in school lunches.

Most important, the Administration inhibited the public's ability to make full use of the dietary guidelines. In a truly shabby display, Secretary Block flip-flopped several times on the subject of "Food 2," the second publication in the U.S.D.A.'s planned series on the guidelines, which included menus for implementing them. At first there was speculation that the Agriculture Secretary wouldn't publish the document at all. Block countered by announcing the department would, after all, publish it. Then Lyng, the meat lobby's man in the U.S.D.A., said the magazine would not be published. Then Block changed his mind and said it would not be published. Then there was some talk about letting the American Dietetic Association publish it, but without the subversive material on fat and cholesterol. Later the private group screwed up its courage and published the magazine in toto.

In the meantime, the Center for Science in the Public Interest obtained a copy of the offending material. When the

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secret document was exposed to the sunlight of public inquiry, it seemed decidedly uninflammatory. Like those that had issued from the Human Nutrition Center before it was destroyed by the Reagan Administration, the publication counseled moderation. Moderation apparently was not good enough for the President and the cholesterol lobby.

Block told Congress why he didn't think people needed much nutritional information from their government:

> Hogs are like people. You can provide protein and grain to a hog and he will balance his ration. People are surely as smart as hogs. I am not so sure the government needs to get so deeply into telling people what they should or should not eat.

The Federal Trade Commission, agreeing with Block's philosophy, dropped its proposal for a Federal standard to govern the use of the word "natural" on foods, so the consumer lost another piece of valuable information. And the Agriculture Department allowed meat processors to sell hot dogs, sausages, bologna, meat stew and meatballs adulterated with as much as 0.6 percent ground bone without calling attention to the fact.

The bone, mixed with the meat during a mechanical processing technique, has been allowed since 1978, but the regulations had required that the product be labeled as containing "powdered bone," something few noncanine consumers in their right minds would want to buy and eat. The Reagan Administration euphemized "bone" as "calcium" in the ingredients list.

Carol Tucker Foreman, who as an Assistant Secretary of Agriculture in the Carter Administration was most responsible for getting the U.S.D.A. to promote the dietary guidelines in ways the public could understand and use, has pointed out that the powdered-bone issue goes far beyond consumers' personal feelings about gnawing on bones. Allowing the bone to be included without giving proper warning to the prospective customer raises an important economic question. "The value of the raw materials going into the product is less when it has powdered bone in it than when it's made out of all meat, and the consumer ought to be able to know that," she said. "Only when that 'powdered bone' is on the label will that product be sold for less than the all-meat product."

It appears that the Federal government has absolutely no intention of being on the consumer's side in the vast, confusing marketplace of food, and is, in fact, arrayed with those portions of the industry that see the consumer as no more than an endlessly exploitable source of money. Just as we can no longer assume with regard to advertising that "they wouldn't let them say that if it weren't true," we are no longer safe in believing that the government will protect us from harmful or deceptively labeled food. The government that we have is one that withholds vital information which our tax dollars have already purchased; that uses our money to subsidize food packers in growing tomatoes that are too awful to eat, and chemical companies in perfecting pesticides that may make us sterile and our children lame; that helped out the fishing industry when swordfish started turning up with unacceptable levels of mercury by rewriting the rules to make more mercury acceptable. And it is a government that is perhaps best symbolized as the outfit that wants to adulterate hot dogs with ground-up bone and serve them to schoolchildren with ketchup that it classifies as a vegetable.

I asked Foreman in 1982, after she had been out of office for some time, if she felt it was proper simply to write off the Federal government as a source of consumer information on matters such as nutrition.

"No," she replied immediately. "I think that the public should *demand* that the government do its job. People have got to take it on themselves to make the government do what it should be doing." □

THE LEBANESE OPPOSITION

Who's Against Gemayel—And Why

NUBAR HOVSEPIAN

The rapid disintegration of the Lebanese Army, bringing the government of President Amin Gemayel to a state of near-collapse, caught the Reagan Administration by surprise. The United States had assumed that Israel's June 1982 invasion would extricate Lebanon from Syria's sphere of influence and allow a Phalange-dominated pro-Israel government to consolidate its control over the entire country, with the aid of a U.S.-trained national army.

Instead, opposition to Gemayel spread. Syria, pursuing its regional interests, aided the antigovernment forces militarily while blocking a withdrawal agreement sponsored by Israel and the United States. On February 6, the opposition was strong enough to stage a *coup d'état*/insurrection, as I shall call it, which sealed Gemayel's fate.

What were the factors that brought about the dramatic erosion of President Gemayel's power? What enabled the opposition, which was defeated in 1982, to grow into a formidable military force with considerable popular support? And what is the future of Lebanon as a sovereign entity?

The first question is easiest to answer. The major reason for his loss of popularity was that he sought to carry out the policies of fellow Phalangists and of the United States and Israel. The Phalange's leaders pressured Gemayel to consolidate their party's domination of the government, and party members and the right-wing militias took over the army and the internal security forces. Gen. Ibrahim Tannous, who fought with the Phalange in the 1975-76 civil war, was appointed Commander in Chief of the army. Under the newly constituted Ministry of Information, all radio and television news programs reflected Phalangist views rather

Nubar Hovsepian, formerly a political affairs officer with the United Nations, is a freelance journalist who was in Beirut in early February.

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than providing a voice for the hoped-for unified Lebanon.

On U.S. advice, Gemayel channeled the government's resources into strengthening the army rather than rebuilding the economy. Military spending, which totaled $1.3 billion last year, absorbed nearly half the national budget. I saw the effects of this military-dominated policy when I visited the slums of South Beirut in early February. Instead of constructing housing for the predominantly Shiite community there, the government had sent the army to destroy the shantytowns, leaving thousands homeless. Last August and again in January the army bombarded the southern suburbs of Beirut with 155-millimeter guns. Neighborhoods like Bier al Abed, a stronghold of the Shiite Amal movement, were devastated.

Such actions contributed to the growth of the opposition and the formation of the National Salvation Front, a coalition of opposition groups, and the National Front of Resistance, a broad-based movement determined to free southern Lebanon from Israeli occupation. Initially, the opposition's rallying cry was abrogation of the Lebanese-Israeli withdrawal agreement of May 17, but soon the demands grew to include reform of the army and reallocation of political power. The opposition proposed the creation of a truly representative Senate as a counterweight to the Christian-dominated Parliament (under the 1943 National Pact, the ratio of Christian to Moslem legislators was set at 6 to 5).

The honeymoon Gemayel enjoyed during his first year in office had ended, and as opposition intensified, so did his determination to crush it. Allied against him were the Amal militia, representing the Shiites and commanded by Nabih Berri, and the Druse Socialist Progressive Party, headed by Walid Jumblat. They were supported by remnants of the Lebanese National Movement, which favored a secular, Arab government; nearly all the former prime ministers, who are Sunni Moslems; and Suleiman Franjieh, a Maronite and former Lebanese President.

The opposition represented northern and southern Lebanon, the Bekaa Valley, the Druse-controlled Shuf Mountains overlooking Beirut, and most of the capital and its southern suburbs. Gemayel's power was limited to the "Phalange ghetto," to use Lebanese National Bloc leader Raymond Edde's phrase. Gemayel had lost touch with the people, and in his isolation he became increasingly dictatorial. He refused to make needed reforms and sought to muzzle opponents.

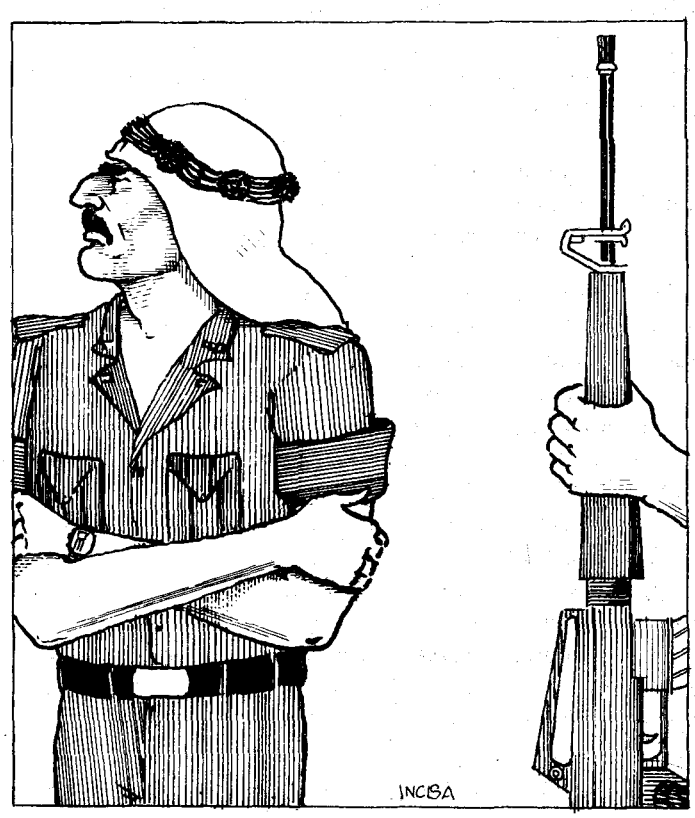
In early January he attempted to restore his dwindling power. Acting on the advice of U.S. advisers and of mediators from Saudi Arabia, Gemayel announced a "security plan" under which the army would enter the Druse mountain strongholds and the southern suburbs of the city controlled by the Amal. Berri and Jumblat opposed the plan, insisting that the army be restructured to make it representative of Lebanese society. They warned Gemayel that were he to proceed, they would call upon Moslems in the army to disobey orders and stay in their barracks. Either Gemayel did not believe them or he put too much faith in the "professionalism" and loyalty of the three American-trained brigades in his army. He continued on a collision course, and Berri and Jumblat, anticipating a renewed army offensive, perfected their plans for a coup/insurrection.

The role of Syria in these events must not, of course, be overlooked. As it happened, the opposition's demands coincided with the interests of Damascus, which supplied weapons and ammunition to antigovernment forces. Contrary to American claims, however, Syrian troops have not participated in the fighting, either last September or during the current conflict. When I traveled through the Druse bases, I saw no evidence of direct Syrian involvement. Syria views Lebanon as an integral part of the Arab world—as do all the participants in the recent peace talks in Geneva, who confirmed Lebanon's "Arab identity." The country will not tolerate a U.S.-trained, Phalange-controlled Lebanese Army allied with Israel. No Lebanese government, whatever its political composition, can afford to ignore the aims of Syrian *Realpolitik*.

Gemayel's loss of legitimacy made the U.S. Marines' "peacekeeping" role impossible. It was regarded by most Lebanese as simply a foreign militia serving the Phalangists.

And so the stage was set for the coup/insurrection. On February 5, still underestimating the forces arrayed against him, President Gemayel accepted the resignation of Prime Minister Shafik al-Wazzan and the entire Cabinet, and then went on television to address the Lebanese people. He blamed Lebanon's problems on "foreigners" and "foreign-inspired plots," and accused Berri and Jumblat of being surrogates of Damascus. The opposition regarded the speech as a declaration of war.

On February 6, the army's General Command announced a twenty-four-hour curfew, beginning at 1:30 P.M. Panic swept through Beirut; people took to shelters, expecting all-out war to begin when the curfew went into effect. But



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within three hours of the announcement, an entire army brigade and half of another, about 4,500 soldiers total, had defected, either joining opposition militias or remaining in their barracks. The militias mopped up the pockets of army resistance in the city. When reinforcements from the elite Phalange-dominated Sarba Brigade attempted to land on the beach near the Continental Hotel, army units that had joined the opposition in West Beirut helped repel them. Troops outside the city still loyal to President Gemayel pounded West Beirut with all their available ammunition, but it had little effect.

Less than a month before, on January 11, Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth W. Dam had described the Lebanese Army as an "encouraging example of a truly national Lebanese institution that works." Such blindness to the political and sectarian polarization of Lebanese society prevented the United States from comprehending that the army's disintegration was inevitable.

The February 6 coup/insurrection was a success, primarily because of solid planning and Berri's strong leadership. Within forty-eight hours, the militias that had been roaming the streets after taking Beirut obeyed Berri's orders and returned to their bases. Government troops and police no longer loyal to Gemayel patrolled in their place, cooperating fully with the opposition's leadership. The rebels had no desire to destroy the institutions of the state; rather they wanted to wrest control of them from Gemayel and the Phalange.

OF INTEREST

'MYTHS ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST'

For a description of this Nation Reprint, and for order form, please turn to the Reprint Mart advertisement on page 322.

FOOTNOTE ON AN HISTORIC CASE: IN RE ALGER HISS

This just-published booklet by author William A. Reuben identifies 114 factual errors in the Federal District Court of New York's 1982 decision upholding Hiss's conviction for perjury in 1950. This flawed decision, upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1983, stands as the last legal word on one of the most celebrated cases in modern history. 1 copy $5, 10 copies $40, 50 copies $150, 100 copies $250. Make checks payable to The Nation Institute and send to "Hiss," The Nation Institute, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

Berri deserves the credit for the high degree of discipline the militiamen showed. He proved to be a formidable field commander, consolidating control of occupied areas and overseeing preparations for an offensive against the coastal city of Khalde, the mountain town of Suk al Gharb and other strongholds of troops obedient to Gemayel.

In contrast to last autumn's hostilities between the Druse and the army, when Berri was unable to open a "second front," Druse and Shiite fighters operated under a unified command structure and battle plan, enabling them to meet army attacks at various places. It was a major achievement.

Other factors contributing to the success of the coup/insurrection can be briefly summarized:

§ *Neutralization of the Army.* Through their contacts in the Sixth Brigade, the main army force in West Beirut, the opposition persuaded middle- and high-ranking officers to keep their men out of the fight (almost 60 percent of the army is Moslem).

§ *Communications.* Jumblat's radio station, The Voice of the Mountain, began broadcasting a week before the fighting and provided information to journalists and the people of Beirut.

§ *Wanton Violence by the Army.* The Lebanese Army's offensive at the end of January caused wholesale destruction comparable to that inflicted by the Israelis during the 1982 war. It led to the resignation of the Wazzan government, which in turn denied Gemayel the support of Sunni Moslems.

§ *Supply Lines.* Berri and Jumblat opened supply lines from the Druse bunkers in the Shuf Mountains to their forces in Beirut.

§ *Dearth of Outside Assistance to Gemayel.* Berri and Jumblat could count on Israel not to intervene because its military commanders fear getting bogged down in another quagmire and its populace favors a complete pullout due to intensified Lebanese resistance. The only help from the United States would be in the form of shelling by the battleship New Jersey and other ships of the Sixth Fleet. In a war of movement, such cannonading would be ineffectual. On the diplomatic front, President Reagan's special envoy Donald Rumsfeld failed, during a visit to Damascus in late January, to persuade Syria to be neutral. Syria continued to insist on unconditional Israeli withdrawal, as provided for in U.N. Security Council Resolution 509, passed in June 1982.

§ *Loss of Christian Support.* The Phalange ghetto shrunk even more when the archbishops of the Greek Orthodox Church and the Greek Catholic Church, who reside, respectively, in East Beirut and Zahle, in the Bekaa Valley, broke with Gemayel. That development belies Gemayel's claim that he and the Phalange represent all Lebanon's Christians.

The net result of the coup/insurrection was the dramatic curtailment of Gemayel's power and the abrogation of the May 17 withdrawal accord with Israel. Politically, it essentially returned Lebanon to the situation that existed after the 1975-76 civil war, when Beirut and the rest of the country were in a state of de facto partition or can-

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tonization, with no effective central authority.

As for the future, Jumblat, Berri and the rest of the opposition will soon understand that it is easy to defeat an unpopular president but much more difficult to take the next step: to formulate a clear political vision of national reconciliation. The opposition's sectarian leaders propose to democratize the political structure within the framework of the confessional system—quasi-autonomous ethnic and religious communities, each with a formal leadership and its own laws governing marriage, inheritance and other social matters, and each electing delegates to Parliament, running its own schools and providing health and other services [see Hovsepian, "The Lebanon Quagmire," *The Nation*, June 6, 1981]. If democratization of that system results in equality of the sixteen officially recognized sects, the state will be powerless. Confessionalism, by definition, requires governmental domination by one sect—under the 1943 National Pact it was the Maronites. If, however, the present unrest leads to a true democratic, secular republic—Lebanon's 1789 in the making, envisioned by the assassinated Druse leader Kamal Jumblat—then the battle of Beirut will have helped save the Lebanese entity.

At present that prospect seems unlikely because only a minority within the opposition supports the revamping of the confessional system. Moreover, the Syrians favor the system as is, since a factionalized Lebanon serves Syria's geopolitical interests. Israel too prefers some sort of partition formula that would deny the Lebanese control of the South.

Given those complexities, the opposition will most likely pursue a course to alter the confessional system in a way that would allow the Maronites to retain control of the presidency, while giving other sects greater representation in the government. Creation of the proposed Senate would be an important step in that direction. It is theoretically possible that the Shiites, who make up the largest sect in the country, will emerge as the dominant political force. But the Maronites and the Phalange would resist such an outcome due to their fears and "ghetto mentality," the product of centuries of cultural conditioning. The best hope is for the emergence of independent Maronite leaders like Raymond Edde, who could offer an alternative to the Phalange leadership. They need only ask fellow Maronites, Have the Phalangists made life safer for you, or have their policies brought disaster?

Finally, the recent battles confirm that so-called Moslem West Beirut, with its sizable Christian population, remains the only viable model for a unified secular Lebanon. It is this example that both Israel and the Phalange tried to destroy. Moreover, recent events have created the conditions to merge the battle against Phalange domination of the state with the battle for liberation of the territories occupied by Israel. The fact that the National Front of Resistance, which operates in southern Lebanon, is not controlled by the National Salvation Front or by any of the regional or international actors gives it leverage to act independently to secure Lebanese sovereignty and unity. Both objectives, if attainable, will be decided by future battles. □

HYDROELECTRIC POWER PLAY

The Fight Over The Private Dams

SCOTT RIDLEY

From California's Mokelumne River to Maine's Androscoggin, and along waterways with names like Saluda, Ocmulgee, Savannah, Wisconsin and Snake, a controversy is arising about the ownership of many of the nation's major hydroelectric dams. Like recent fights over the sale of coal leases and Federal lands, the issue cuts to the heart of the Reagan Administration's preference for private development of natural resources over public ownership. The outcome will have far-reaching consequences for the power industry and for hundreds of cities and towns.

At stake are 586 private dams, with a total value estimated at as much as $100 billion. Private companies were awarded licenses to operate them under the Federal Power Act of 1920. The law stipulates that those licenses expire after thirty to fifty years and that local governments will be given preference to take them over at that time, after paying fair compensation. Many of the licenses on dams built during the 1930s and 1940s are nearing the end of their terms. Already, ten licenses have been challenged, and during the next ten years, 174 will come up for renewal.

Private utilities, joined by other dam owners (mainly textile and paper mills), are fighting the challenges in court and pushing for an amendment to the Federal Power Act. Plagued by consumer complaints about the rising costs of electricity, they want continued control of cheap hydroelectric power. Although it accounts for only 13 percent of the electricity generated in this country, it is more profitable than coal- or nuclear-generated power, and it will grow increasingly so in the future.

Public-power advocates regard the lease-renewal procedure as an opportunity to strengthen and increase the number of locally owned systems. They also fear that if the utilities begin to erode public preference rights, a trend toward private takeover of public power companies will be established.

In 1982 Pacific Gas and Electric, which faces challenges to four of its licenses, joined Southern California Edison in a public relations campaign warning ratepayers that their electric bills would go up if the leases were not renewed. Last November forty-five U.S. representatives, frightened by the specter of consumer protests against rising rates, introduced a bill to amend the Federal Power Act to enable the dams' present owners to hold their leases in perpetuity.

The American Public Power Association, an organization of 1,750 municipal and county power systems, argues that

Scott Ridley is a Washington, D.C., writer and energy analyst. He is working on a book about the power industry.

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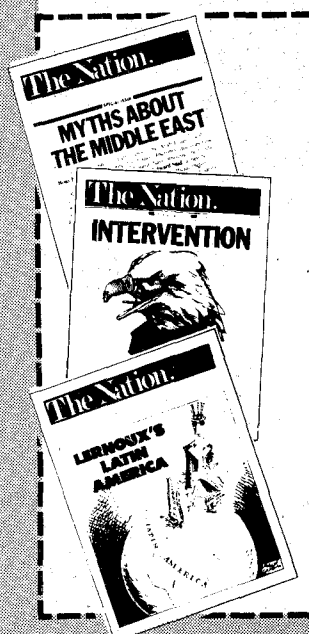

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the bill is unnecessary, that many of the licenses will not be challenged and that the "socialization of water resources" the private utilities warn about will not materialize. Public-power advocates say that the private utility attack on dam relicensing is only the beginning of a broader assault on their power supply. Nearly 24 percent of the nation's electricity users are served by public power systems, whose rates averaged 17 percent less than those of private companies in 1981. They own only 14 percent of the total generating capacity, however, so many of them must purchase power from private utilities under long-term contracts. Along with the first call on dam licenses, the Federal Power Act guarantees public systems privileged access to power generated by Federal dams, and the private utilities are calling for repeal of that provision as well. Loss of statutory preferences would clearly undermine public systems in hundreds of cities and towns and have an impact on all electricity users.

Public power systems provide indirect competition in the power industry, acting as a yardstick by which state regulatory agencies measure private utilities' service and rates. A weakening or loss of public systems would break that yardstick and remove a vital check on rates. The savings private utility consumers might claim in maintaining control of the dams could easily be lost in the long term.

The issue of public versus private ownership of the dams is an old one. During the Progressive era, conservationists deplored the trend toward private control of the nation's rivers (by 1912 corporations owned three-fifths of the nation's commercial water power). The Federal Power Act was a compromise between private interests and public-power advocates. It gave preference to state and local governments at sites for which they were competing with private companies, and the thirty- to fifty-year lease provision prevented private interests from gaining permanent control of a dam site. The act kept peace between the two sides until 1970, when the leases began to run out and local governments asserted their preference rights.

In 1974 the tiny hamlet of Bountiful, Utah, challenged the Utah Power and Light Company's license on a dam on the Weber River. Then the City of Santa Clara, California, opposed Pacific Gas and Electric's relicensing application for the Mokelumne River dam. In Washington, Clark and Cowlitz Counties went after Pacific Power and Light's Merwin dam on the Lewis River. And in Montana the confederated Kootenai-Salish tribes initiated proceedings to take over Montana Power and Light's Kerr dam.

In 1980 the Bountiful case came before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), to which Congress delegated the authority to decide license applications. Although the commission did not decide on Bountiful's bid to take over the Weber River dam, it issued ground rules for choosing between public and private claimants. Licensees and challengers were required to submit plans detailing how they would preserve a river's ecosystem and generate power in the public interest. If the plans were found to be of equal merit, the public agency would take precedence. What appeared to be an equitable compromise did not stand up, however. President Reagan's appointees to FERC sought to shift the balance to private development of water power.

Last September, only two months after Federal courts upheld FERC's guidelines, the Merwin case came before the commission. Applying the standards set down in the Bountiful case, a FERC administrative judge, John Lotis, ruled in favor of the two counties. But the commission overruled Lotis's decision and gave Pacific Power and Light a thirty-year renewal of its license. In a highly questionable move it also overturned the Bountiful guidelines. Privately owned utilities were elated with the decision, but doubting it would stand up in court, they lobbied Congress to change the law.

Supporters of the bill to amend the power act include liberals Henry Waxman and Howard Berman of California, who miss the long-term implications and see it—mistakenly—as a proconsumer measure that would protect private utility customers from rate increases. A number of other legislators, fearing that a negative vote will suggest they favor higher utility rates, will probably do likewise.

But the attack on relicensing of dams is the wedge's thin edge; private utilities want to eliminate all public preference for energy resources. As locally owned power systems are increasingly undermined, consumers will be caught between a faceless and increasingly centralized utility industry and a maze of government regulatory agencies which respond only to political manipulation.

With pressure building in Congress and popular sentiment being stirred up by private utilities, Alex Radin, executive director of the American Public Power Association, expects a "time-consuming, divisive and ultimately bitter" struggle. The principle at stake is the same as it was sixty years ago: the right of the people to use the nation's rivers for the public good. □

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DON BOGEN

MAKING CERTAIN IT GOES ON: The Collected Poems of Richard Hugo. *W. W. Norton. 456 pp. $25.*

We are likely to see many books of collected poems in the next few years. Richard Hugo, who died in 1982, was part of a generation of poets who were born in the 1920s, came into prominence in the 1960s and have now attained the stature of established literary figures. It's a diverse group—Adrienne Rich, Galway Kinnell, Philip Levine, Robert Creeley—yet its members share a common experience and a common dilemma. They are the first American poets to develop within a firm structure of support: writing classes, academic employment, readings and a small but interested audience. Their predecessors, writing in less comfortable times—the war years and the culturally stultified 1950s—are notable for the energy and variety of their collected work: Lowell's stylistic transformations, Roethke's psychic breakthroughs, the astonishing last poems of Elizabeth Bishop. But writers today may find it more difficult to push their work in new directions. When a poet has a public, a publisher, and sometimes an employer praising old work and demanding more like it, the temptation is just to do it all over again. Not all our middle-aging poets have fallen into the trap—one thinks of Adrienne Rich's continuing metamorphosis—but as the collected poems of those now in their fifties and sixties come out, it is clear that a major challenge for this generation has been to avoid self-imitation.

Richard Hugo is not well served by this volume of collected poems. His eight large books are crammed together here, with poems beginning and ending in mid-page, some annoying typographical errors—including an abrupt change in the typeface of one poem—and a welter of blurbs cluttering the dust jacket. The title, with its fashionable gerund and open-ended tone, seems almost a parody of current literary fads. As a phrase, "making certain it goes on" is awkwardly colloquial and vague—making certain *what* goes on? As a title for twenty years of a man's work, it lacks dignity. Yet even with a cleaner format, more stringent proofreading and a sensible title, such a collection would not display Hugo's work to its best advantage. Hugo published a great amount of poetry in his lifetime, an average of a book every two and a half years between 1961 and 1980, and his verse underwent few major stylistic or thematic developments. Bringing all his poems together in a lump like this exaggerates the essential sameness of much of his work.

Hugo wrote mostly about places and himself. This combination of subjects can make the collection seem dully repetitive: the poet in the rain forest, the poet at the beach, the poet leaving the Italian village, etc. A number of the pieces, particularly those set in nature, do not rise above the level of verbal postcards. Hugo is more successful when he focuses on a social environment, as in this description of immigrants' shacks:

> Here, a cracked brown hump
> of knuckle caved a robber's skull.
> That cut fruit is for Slavic booze.
> Jars of fruit-spiked bourbon bake
> on roofs throughout July; festive tubs
> of vegetables get wiser in the sun.
> All men are strong. Each woman knows
> how river cod can be preserved.
> ("Between the Bridges")

These eight lines conjure a world. A characteristic iambic ground beat and subtle repetition of sounds—hard "c," short and long "u"—give the free verse a fluid shapeliness. This is careful work: precise, imaginative and deftly musical.

The lyricism of Hugo's poetry is balanced by his insistently colloquial tone. Like others of his generation, Hugo worked to develop a poetic voice that would sound authentic and natural, not academic. There is, unfortunately, a typical pose that comes along with this, that of poet as regular guy, sensitive but not particularly artistic or intellectual. After several poems this stance can become annoying. I read more than I wanted to about fishing, drinking and chasing after "girls." These last are usually beautiful and lost, and the poet is not above crying in his beer about them. There is an awkward element of self-pity in some of Hugo's work, especially the poems about bars, dance halls and other scenes of failed romance. The stance of poet as regular guy creates problems in happier pieces as well. The letter poems of *31 Letters and 13 Dreams* (1977), most of which are to friends and well-known fellow poets, can be disturbingly ingratiating, especially when Hugo catalogues his own and his friends' successes in middle age. Lines like "Dear Vi: You were great at the Roethke festival this summer/in Portland" and "Dear John: Great to see your long-coming, well-crafted book/getting good reviews" are rhythmically slack and colorless—they could be snippets from anyone's mail.

But *31 Letters and 13 Dreams* exaggerates the weaknesses of Hugo's typical pose and style. In his best poems, he leaves such posturing behind and engages fundamental social issues: alienation, community, loss. No one has written more evocatively of a certain kind of American place: the mean small towns of an indifferent Western landscape, in which the rawness of our history is most exposed. Though Hugo grew up near Seattle and clearly loved the Pacific Northwest, it was the distinctly harsher country of Montana, where he settled in 1964, that triggered his most characteristic poems. It is a land of failures—economic, social, personal—and the poet delineates the marginal lives of its inhabitants with humor, acceptance and lyric grace, as here in "Silver Star":

> This is the final resting place of
> engines,
> farm equipment and that rare, never
> more
> than occasional man. Population:
> 17. Altitude: unknown. For no
> good reason you can guess, the
> woman
> in the local store is kind. Old steam
> trains
> have been rusting here so long, you
> feel
> the urge to oil them, to lay new track,
> to start
> the west again.

In this and other poems on decaying Western scenes, Hugo is the consummate American elegist, consoling us for the blasted places of our history and reminding us that human warmth can still survive.

Don Bogen teaches at the University of Cincinnati. His poems have appeared in The Nation, The New Republic, The Kenyon Review *and other journals.*

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Hugo's laments for Silver Star, Philipsburg, Drummond and other washed-out towns are thoughtful and moving, but the attitude of consolation may finally be a little too easy. His work is considerably stronger, I think, when it adopts a more critical approach to the pain of history. In certain odd poems throughout his career—a study of Mission Carmel in his first book, a look at a cemetery in Elkhorn from the work of the mid-1970s—Hugo confronts a suffering more deeply rooted than the malaise of lonely shopkeepers and former mill hands. His response is not sympathy and acceptance but controlled anger and clarifying irony. In "The Bridge of Sighs" he has this to say about a Tintoretto mural in Venice:

> Giants paint what kings require.
> Uniforms ablaze. Glory of our time.
> Multicolored spears. Sweet ax
> come down and save the state from
> shame.
> This son took the throne and so on
> while you and I went white with pain.

The verse is sharper than usual—and not just because of that well-placed ax. The art-sweetened tools of state authority are spat out in bitter fragments, and the off-rhyme of "time," "shame," and "pain" subtly yet insistently indicts. Indians enslaved to the church, a painter in the service of tyranny—Hugo does some of his best work with subjects whom simple pity cannot help.

This more complex work culminates in his last two books, *The Right Madness on Skye* and *White Center*, both published in 1980. Though the latter includes a few postcard pieces and some fairly predictable consolations, it also shows a new perspective that transcends the typical stance of Hugo's previous work. Much of *White Center* is about the intractability of the past, its resistance to the distortions of nostalgia or self-accommodating verse. In "Second Chances" Hugo is able to look back at the old self-pitying vision of himself "in ruin, living alone, some wretched town/ where friendship is based on just being around" and see its cheap yet seductive attractions clearly. *White Center* is, finally, a book that rejects things: glamorous self-dramatizing gestures, the preoccupation with beautiful losers in small towns, boozy myths of sensitivity. The emotional force behind this rejection invigorates a good deal of the writing, from the long-lined roiling stanzas of the title poem to this harsh

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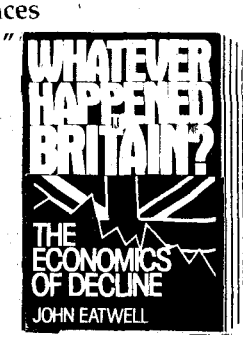

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lyric passage from a poem for James Wright:

> Here's the trick;
> We had to stay drunk
> to welcome the river
> to live in a shack
> to die on the bank
> beneath the bigoted sky
> under the river birds
> day after day
> to murder away
> all water that might die.
> ("The Towns We Know and
> Leave Behind, the Rivers
> We Carry with Us")

In *The Right Madness on Skye* Hugo's increased self-awareness adds perspective to his studies of battles, ruined castles and crumbling Scottish graveyards. Easy poetic sympathy for the oppressed is replaced by a more accurate vision of what art can and cannot do. "Greystone Cottage" examines the stance of the poet as tourist with a fine self-mocking humor and intelligence:

> I dream myself poacher. I dream
> myself
> benevolent wealthy invader, nothing
> on board
> but my need to be welcome ashore.
> I bring you songs from a glamorous
> planet.

Recognizing the limits of imagination, Hugo attempts more complex and thoughtful poems in this book, and the result is his tightest and most uniformly successful volume.

There is a tomblike finality about any posthumous collection, but it is especially distressing when the poet's last work was his best. Richard Hugo's accomplishments tend to get lost in the sheer bulk of *Making Certain It Goes On*. Yet there are important poems here. What we will come to value in Hugo's poetry, I think, is not his easygoing pose and the repetitive work it produced but the moments of clarity that delineate human loss. □

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Who Speaks for the South?

NELL IRVIN PAINTER

TELL ABOUT THE SOUTH: The Southern Rage to Explain. *By Fred Hobson. Louisiana State University Press. 391 pp. $35. Paper $12.95.*

BLACK SOUTHERNERS, 1619-1869. *By John B. Boles. The University Press of Kentucky. 244 pp. $24.*

Tell About the South belongs to a growing list of recent Southern intellectual histories, whose best-known examples are Morton Sosna's *In Search of the Silent South: Southern Liberals and the Race Issue*, Michael O'Brien's *The Idea of the American South, 1920-1941*, Richard H. King's *A Southern Renaissance: The Cultural Awakening of the American South, 1930-1955* and Daniel Singal's *The War Within: From Victorian to Modernist Thought in the South, 1919-1945*. Each of these books delves into what might be called (still) the mind of the South—the thinking of Southerners about the idea of the South. Each is organized biographically, concentrating on the lives and work of such thoughtful Southerners as Howard Odum, the Nashville Agrarians, William Alexander Percy and Lillian Smith. Although these historians stake out different chronological territories, they overlap enough in time and personality to invite comparison. Of the books that purport to present Southern thinking in general, Fred Hobson's is the most appealing historically, even though he is the only literary scholar of the five. Managing not to bog down in prolonged textual analysis or to indulge in far-flung flights of theoretical fancy, Hobson presents his authors in relation to their times and their peers.

Hobson argues that ever since slavery became an acute political issue in the 1820s and 1830s, the South has been the most self-conscious of all American regions. He identifies two strands of Southern writing about the South—the shame-and-guilt school of George Washington Cable and Lillian Smith, and the apologists, like Thomas Nelson Page and the Nashville Agrarians—and follows them from the mid-nineteenth century through the civil rights revolution to the era of the Sun Belt.

With serious reservations—more on that later—I find *Tell About the South* a fine book. It is soundly based in history, gracefully written, unflaggingly interesting. Whereas other historians treat separately contemporaries like Donald Davidson, Howard Odum, Wilbur Cash and William Percy, producing the impression that each functioned in tranquil isolation, Hobson looks at them together. They jostle with each other, snipe and praise, in a lively discussion that captures contention as well as consensus. Despite the exhaustive research that obviously undergirds the book, it retains a freshness and a seeming effortlessness that make it a pleasure to read.

On the face of it, John Boles's *Black Southerners* belongs to an entirely different category of writing. Boles's subjects, who are black, do not speak about their own condition in his pages, whereas Hobson's, who are white, are impressively articulate. Hobson presents original scholarship; Boles offers a summary of recent writing, carefully including nearly everyone who has made a contribution to the study of Southern blacks within his period, although Thomas Holt's prizewinning *Black Over White: Negro Political Leadership in South Carolina During Reconstruction* is inexplicably missing.

In his description of the place of blacks in Southern society, Boles is of two minds. Sometimes he scrupulously discusses the various sorts of slave and free black experience over time. He gives due weight to the diversity that existed within the slave community: drivers, house servants, field hands, fancy girls. But despite that explicit recognition of variety, the book mostly presents black experience as a monolith, contrasted with that of whites as a whole. Readers familiar with recent historiography will pause at such

Nell Irvin Painter teaches history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is writing a book about American views of the South.

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sweeping generalizations as this: slaves "slowed the tempo of their labor" and "quickly perceived that . . . they were better fed and housed, and less apt to be separated from their families, on more prosperous plantations," and "put much store in semimagical folk beliefs." Or this: "Race ultimately united the white South." The two entities here are "slaves" on the one hand and "whites" on the other, as though the antonym of slave were not freeman.

Whites, Boles says, were united early on by their interest in preserving slavery; he dismisses the class conflicts usually associated with antebellum Southern society over such issues as the Bank of the United States or secession. The picture that emerges is of two racial monoliths solidly confronting each other, a view that is reinforced by the absence of black voices, even though an impressive body of slave narratives exists to illuminate what blacks thought about their place within the institution of slavery and the society of the South. *Black Southerners* thereby becomes another example of what Hobson calls "telling about the South"—more exactly, telling about the South from a point of view completely outside the region's black communities. John Boles, a white Southerner, explains that race divided the South into two mutually exclusive categories (although he acknowledges enormous cultural interchange), and that thanks to slaves' family ties and resilient culture, their situation was not all that bad.

Boles belongs to one of Hobson's schools of explainers about the South—he's an apologist—but that does not mean that the same conceptual mold produced both books. Boles begins by applying the word "Southerner" to blacks as well as whites and says that slavery did not strip blacks of humanity and culture. But if these assumptions are valid, they expose a serious myopia in the work of intellectual historians like Fred Hobson: if black Southerners are Southerners and possess their share of humanity, then presumably they have something to say about the land of their birth, a region in which race has always been a central issue—some would say *the* central issue. But Hobson includes not a single black writer in his analysis.

Other intellectual historians of the South—O'Brien, King, Singal—have failed to notice that black Southerners might have written about the South. Hobson at least realizes the need to explain why he ignores voices on the other side of the color line. He admits that black Southerners, more than any other Southerners, possessed the rage to explain that is the subject of his book. But even after making this damaging concession, he falls back on a lame excuse trotted out by other historians of the South: "The story of their [blacks'] rage to explain is a book in itself." In a similar vein, Singal assumes that black thought consisted entirely of folklore and the blues, requiring special interpretive skills. He notes that "an important study remains to be written on black culture and thought in the modern South," but claims that the preparation of such a book would call for "the use of sources quite different from those employed for the present book." It is as though black writers and scholars wrote in a language inaccessible to present-day students of the South, as though their views make sense only when discussed separately. A book on what blacks wrote about the South would doubtless be worthwhile, but why such intellectual Jim Crow? Black Southerners are as much Southerners as white Southerners, and what they have had to say about the South does not belong to some foreign species of thought.

To omit black Southerners from a history of the South is to pretend that well-published black Southerners with pronounced views about their region (Booker T. Washington, T. Thomas Fortune, John Hope, Zora Neale Hurston, Kelly Miller, Carter G. Woodson, Alrutheus A. Taylor, Richard Wright, Charles S. Johnson) did not exist or spoke only to themselves. And to contend that reading their work requires special skills or peculiar source materials is nonsense. Hobson and others would have needed only to recognize that articulate black Southerners have been writing about the South for a long time and that they, too, are worth the research.

MOUNTAIN AND VALLEY

The full measure of all unknown quantities
resides in music, in the crumpled foil of
breaking waves and the bridges of passion
that connect the members of the string quintet.

Such music shivers a line of flame up
from the horizon, melting the darker clouds
onto the mountaintop, transfiguring them
into bodies at play, in limpid shadow.

Like perfect statuettes out of the past,
loved ones poised with toys and fruit of snow,
with forgotten conversations on their lips,
they wave to us from the top of the world.

Scattered as we are, here below,
projected by Mercator and divined by Aquinas,
we write music in our well-heated chambers,
we perform haltingly, or smoothly, but we cannot wave back.

We can be sure only of the future
advancing on us from the rear,
and the past (its godlike phantoms)
pulling us forward, into places that we dread.

A few madmen scale the mountain,
their ears filled with diminishing winds,
their voices crackling in shared solitude,
as they leave behind all burdens of health and weather.

But the rest of us must remain in the valley,
in the clotted, musical air
where one day death, disguised as a peddler,
will arrive with a tonic, a solution,
a beautiful message from those people on the mountain.

Nicholas Christopher

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There is a hard part, of course. If the views of people who spoke from behind what W.E.B. Du Bois called "the veil" were included, many of the tidy generalizations of these books about "the South" would break down. By ignoring the spokesmen for one-third of the region's people—especially that part of the people who were workers and peasants almost exclusively—writers like Hobson rob Southern thinking of much of its depth and controversy. No historian of a society so consumed by race as the South can afford to deal with only one side of the color line (whichever side, mind you) and claim to be speaking of the South as a whole. As good as they are, intellectual histories like Fred Hobson's are studies of the articulate white South only, and as such are narrow and nearsighted. The region deserves better. □

Up Against the Wall

ROBERT HOUSTON

THE WALL JUMPER. *By Peter Schneider. Pantheon. 139 pp. $11.95.*

Peter Schneider's *The Wall Jumper* is, among other things, a sharp portrait of Berlin, the world's only officially sanctioned schizophrenic city. The narrator—most likely Schneider himself—sets out to discover and understand the city he's lived in most of his adult life, a city that because of habit and a series of comfortable assumptions that he shares with most other West Berliners, he has never truly seen.

He begins looking for Berlin in conversations with people in bars, with border guards, East German intellectuals, long-lost relatives on "the other side"; he anatomizes his broken love affair with an East German woman, now over the wall and lost in the wilderness of the West; he sifts through the hundreds of observed details that go to make up life in that "Siamese city" where "since yesterday, a thousand years have passed." Yet he decides at last that Berlin can only be described in terms of a monolith turned metaphor: the Berlin wall itself.

He starts collecting stories, anecdotes, statistics about the wall. And as he does so, he begins to formulate the notion of a mythical protagonist for his book, a man obsessed by the wall and everything it stands for, a "wall jumper." "It has become clearer what I'm looking for," he says. "The story of a man who loses himself and starts turning into nobody. By a chain of circumstances still unknown to me, he becomes a boundary-walker between the two German states. . . . Having come to distrust the hastily adopted identity that both states offer him, he feels at home only on the border."

He digs deeper, in search of that chain of circumstances. He discovers the story of Kabe, a West Berliner who jumped the wall into the East fifteen times and for the life of him can't explain why he did it; of poor Bolle, who became so driven by the notion of destroying the wall that he began defecting from East to West and back again, enmeshing himself so thoroughly in double and triple agentry that he lost all identity; of the East German defector who learned that his former compatriots had mined the perimeter of the wall with an army of insidious secret devices, and became so determined to disarm all 22,000 of them that it cost him his life; of the three East German kids who discovered a way to slip back and forth across the wall for the sole purpose of going to movie westerns.

The anecdotes pile up, yet remain disjointed. He fantasizes surprise meetings between wall jumpers from both East and West on top of the wall and imagines their wonderfully inane conversations about their "sport." He revels in the silliness of East German restrictions: embargoes on scuba diving equipment to keep would-be escapees from swimming the wall's moat, the prohibition of books on how to build hot-air balloons. In the end, the wall becomes like Mount Everest: its meaning is that it is simply there, the object of a thousand obsessions.

The true meaning of the wall, then, lies in its power as metaphor. After an argument with Pommerer, an East German friend, the narrator says, "It will take us longer to tear down the wall in our heads than any wrecking company will need for the wall we can see. Pommerer and I can dissociate ourselves from our states as much as we like, but

Robert Houston's seventh novel, The Nation Thief, *has just been published by Pantheon.*

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we can't speak to each other without having our states speak for us. . . . We have been equally receptive sons of the system that has brought us up." The world has been East and West too long now, he implies; we have been too firmly set in our attitudes toward each other for any real kind of reconciliation to take place. No matter how many literal walls we may jump, the tragedy is that the one state we cannot escape is in ourselves. "Where does the state end and a self begin?" the narrator asks at one point. The final irony is that here, where we so need a boundary, there may no longer be one.

The Wall Jumper's dust jacket calls it a novel. Schneider himself, who is a scriptwriter, poet and political essayist as well as a best-selling fiction writer in Germany, has said that calling the book a novel in the traditional sense was a "voluntary error" on the part of his German publisher. As a novelist, he says, he is like one of his wall jumpers: the most he can expect to do is make a series of leaps, of dashes toward his subject in an attempt to master it. He mixes memoir with essay, anecdote with meditation on the meaning of that anecdote, narrative with political observation, until he arrives at what he calls "a bastard form," which reflects the discontinuity of history and civic life that living with the wall implies. Or, it might be added, that living on a divided planet implies for all of us.

For the most part, the approach works. Where it doesn't is in the presentation of certain major characters, who appear from nowhere, as if Schneider was making a *cinéma vérité* film. Films can provide visual contexts and movement to make such techniques work. Books don't, and readers make demands different from those of film audiences. For Schneider not to have acknowledged those demands results less in a reinforcement of the book's premise of discontinuity than in simple confusion and frustration.

Nonetheless, *The Wall Jumper* is an honest, rich book, well translated and movingly, vividly written. It is one of those rare books that come back at odd moments to intrude on your comfortable conclusions and easy images. As a writer and as a political thinker, Schneider speaks with a voice that needs to be listened to by both East and West, by other writers who would learn from him, by anyone who would understand better what it means, ultimately, to live in the last half of this century. □

DANCE.

MINDY ALOFF

The image of man as a machine is implicit in dancing, especially classic dancing. Odile's thirty-two fouettés en tournant and the percussive and evenly metered "Dance for the Four Little Swans" in *Swan Lake*; the lines of Wilis in *Giselle*, softly shuttling by each other in arabesques voyagées; the little muse train in Balanchine's *Apollo*; the impersonations of mechanical dolls in *The Nutcracker* and *Coppélia*—one could turn out examples on an assembly line. Common to all are exact repetition, clearly punctuated beats and sharply focused shapes. Outside the ballet, the most fine-tuned American dance machine is the chorus line of The Rockettes: the appeal of the whole depends on the apparent lack of individuality among its parts. The idea of precisely fashioned parts working together efficiently for a common good has something of a political character to it, and it doesn't take much to imagine how machines fired up European artists and intellectuals in the giddy years of the early 1920s. A "machine esthetic" jumped national boundaries, linking some unlikely personalities. A house, pronounced the elegant Le Corbusier, is "a machine for living," while the choreographer Nikolai Foregger admonished his colleagues in the Russian theater, "Actors! Directors! Don't look around you for inspiration. We have only one teacher: The Machine."

Of course, there are machines and machines: the metaphors change with the technology. On a recent *Dance in America* PBS-TV show devoted to his work, Peter Martins of the New York City Ballet said that his *Concerto for Two Solo Pianos* had been inspired by Pac-Man. (At one point, the ballerina, Heather Watts, seems to regain composure in an energy square created by the corps.) Foregger's "machine dances," performed last fall during one of several evenings devoted to Constructivist music and performance at The Kitchen in SoHo—with their mimicry of chugging pistons and electrical effects—belonged to another time, like the engine of a Model T Ford. (One dance, in fact, had the cast simulating an ignition.) The "biomechanical exercises" of Vsevolod Meyerhold—pairs of men and women engaged in comically exaggerated acts of aggression on the count of four—also looked antiquated, like tin wind-up toys.

The more extreme a dance style is, the more likely it is to suggest either farce or fate. The flattened postures of Paul Taylor's *The Rite of Spring (The Rehearsal)* make a brilliant farce; the stiffened, stabbing architecture of Nijinska's 1923 *Les Noces*, a masterpiece of Constructivist dance, embodies a tragic world. In Balanchine's 1978 *Kammermusik No. 2*, with its systematic exaggerations of turned-out and turned-in stances, its chorus line of men and its two athletic ballerinas constantly observed in flagrant en face

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positions, farce and fate commingle in a vivid and unsettling way. (The 1924 Hindemith score is exactly reflected.) In Alwin Nikolais's 1953 *Tensile Involvement*, one of the dances performed by the Nikolais Dance Theatre at City Center in February, there is a moment—my favorite in Nikolais's work—in which one state is suddenly shown to be another. Each dancer holds a length of elastic, the other end of which is attached to a point offstage in the flies. The audience sees a cat's cradle of lines, linked with an offhand gaiety. The image emphasizes abstract matters—spatial relationships, stage design, the proportions of the human body against those of the proscenium. Then, the magic happens. A tenth dancer runs on stage—not attached. He's free, merely a figure running. Suddenly, simply by being present, he changes the significance of what we have seen. Images of impersonal cause-and-effect, of puppetry, of linkage beyond individual control jump to the fore. How simple and unselfconscious real freedom is, and how rare. The surprise is a piece of audience manipulation worthy of Hitchcock, a sensational moment of theater.

In conjunction with the exhibit Kandinsky: Russian and Bauhaus Years, 1915-1933, at the Guggenheim, The Kitchen presented a program in January, *Oskar Schlemmer's Bauhaus Dances*, directed and reconstructed by Debra McCall with the advice of former Bauhaus student Andreas Weininger. "Mechanistic cabaret, metaphysical eccentricity, spiritual tightrope walking, ironic variété?" McCall quotes Schlemmer in her program note. "His sense of the 'mechanical' was not that of the dehumanized robot, but rather that of the softly animated marionette whose suspended relationship to gravity permitted greater freedom of movement." In *Metal Dance*, exactingly performed by McCall's associate Brian Hanna, the figure wears a form-fitting unitard, his face has been whitened, there is a silvery helmet on his head, and on each hand has been placed a silver orb. He bends over and stands erect, his image reflected in sidepieces of brilliant corrugated metal, exactly like a published photograph from the Bauhaus performance. The dancer performs nothing more complicated than bringing the orbs together and jumping upward, his feet parallel and his toes pointed. But the contrast of the brilliant surfaces with the velvety softness of the movement shows in a concentrated way what "dance theater" is about.

Schlemmer's dances are miniatures, with a limited range of effect. As McCall presents them, however, they offer real theatrical experiences and, within their self-imposed limits, rich ones. Their intellectual restraint and sustained fantasy also seem very much of a bygone time. When I think of the concerts

From 'Notes From a Child of Paradise'

VIII.

Olivetree and vineyard; red dust; wild thyme;
Wind-ruffled hectares of grassy wheat, flecked
With carmine poppies; square stonework tower
And barrel vault cowled in tiles of a church
Keeping watch in the fields till one bright star
Struck the angelus. . . . We crossed and recrossed
The lands between Nîmes, Aix, Les Baux, then
Down to Aigues-Mortes and Sète to stand before,
Sacred name, the Mediterranean.
Some places ask us to live up to *them*.

Wherefore, if we wandered through Arles to find
The Aliscamps (I, too, had to stop and
Look it up, that Roman graveyard Dante
Plucked from his memory to help render
The sarcophagi or large fish-poachers
He simmered his Christian heretics in,
Lids ajar from the steamhead of dissent);
Or if we crept tentative steps over
The Pont du Gard; or strained to catch the gist
Of *Le Soulier de satin* (drama of

A New World explored, passions, storms, shipwrecks)
At Orange's antique colosseum;
Or downed our pastis du quatorze juillet
At metal café tables camouflaged
In shadow leaves from plane trees overhead—
Every warrant promised time grew mythic
For those who met eternal things half way:
First, by supposing them; then taking steps
To find a likeminded soul; and last, the . . .
Arena where the myth you shared might shine.

XII.

For America is the Garden of
Paradox: new golden land, it was brave
And new to them; but in itself, old, old
As only sheer geology can be,
Before history comes to give some scale
To the monotone of eternity,
Overlaying a grid of date and place,
Memorable wars, claims and boundaries
That would supplant the concrete calendar
Of aborigines whose clock was myth.

Wilderness and garden, where liberty
Flourished, dishevelment of death mingled
With life renewed, the green seedling rooted
In crumbling brown peat from its fallen great
Parent, that brought down also the cordage
Of wild grape, not in defeat but patience;
The tendril's springy drill, the classic leaf
Seize and cling to the rise of each new tree,
Sharers with them all in light sought upward—
Pillars of a temple; a roof of crowns.

When one has left his house and village green,
Society of women, customs, law,
The handworked coverlet and mantel chime,
Roof in imbricate shingles, silver smoke,
With stick and pouch, a polished rifle, he
Makes his solitary way through forests;
Then, well along, in a birch-lined clearing,
He pauses for the vista—the lost trail
Back, the uphill climb to summits far off
In azure-white noon—and feels an old fear.

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I've seen so far this season by modern dancers more or less of my generation, only one—Mark Morris's at Dance Theater Workshop in December—left the audience with a sense of ideas reasonably explored and space irrationally animated. Other concerts offered moments. A most beautiful one occurred in Deborah Hay's at D.T.W., when five stony-faced women pivoting on their heels as slowly as planets, bolts of material locked in their outstretched arms, managed without any aid apart from the Pauline Oliveros score to re-create a Southwestern mesa. More often, though, as with Senta Driver, I'd admire a choreographer's analysis of an allusion, say to a Bournonville ballet, while remaining blind to its theatrical relevance in the work at hand; or I'd relish a dancer's virtuosity (Karole Armitage's *Paradise*) without being able to keep the plot of her action in mind—an essential step in the appreciation of choreography.

How did those guys *do* it, back there in the mists of the new century? Nearly everything written about the Russian Cubo-Futurist "opera" of 1913, *Victory Over the Sun*, describes the plot as nonsense, yet the reconstruction brought to the Brooklyn Academy of Music last fall made emotional sense even when we couldn't make out the words. (The script, which concerns a band of "Futuremen" who steal the sun, is declaimed by the singer-actors in robot fashion, syllable by syllable, through full-face masks. The Futurists meant to set the audience on its ear, and seventy years later, they still do.) The very act of reconstruction brings some retroactive coherence to the past; but even more, some mechanism within the work permits a later generation to perceive order in the action, given the crucial help of costumes, text, set designs and vestiges of a score. The facts of staging evaporate, but the truths of the machine may endure. □

XXIX.

As in those movies of the Forties, when
One after one a pouncing wind rips
Pages from the calendar and time
Speeds past like headlines, thus, disoriented,
We walked through the anarchy, with no part
To play, foreign observers who, if they
Mean to act, must do so somewhere else.
Metro and power strikes, the handbill snowstorm!
Lucien Goldmann confronted with his burning
Renault and shouting, "Oui! C'est bien, c'est bien!"
The hoarding and the shortages—this
Hurtling armored tank of happenstance
Where human bodies were maimed, real blood spilled,
Could hardly note the anguish of mere extras
Or be affected by minor interventions.

The million-strong national protest march.
De Gaulle's clandestine leave. His plebiscite.
Each newsflash took on a retrospective
Cast, as though unfolding at the remove
Of several decades; as though History
Could only be recorded, never fully
Lived. . . . And life was what we chiefly had
At heart, that paydirt any but the stager
Of self-immolation will, I think, have been
Rooting for, in the smouldering city dump
Of someone's throwaway century.
The lease was up. Time to go back, to struggles
More our own. . . . No, first a pilgrimage
To Italy. To Florence, first, and then
Back to where our passports said was home.

Alfred Corn

FILMS.

KATHA POLLITT

Broadway Danny Rose

Woody Allen's last movie, *Zelig*, satirized the conventions of newsreels while savoring their daffy charm. His new movie, *Broadway Danny Rose*, does the same for the Damon Runyonesque never-never land of New York City entertainment. It's a Jewish *Guys and Dolls*, complete with a beautiful Mafia widow, bumbling thugs, seltzer-swilling comics and waiters who remember your name.

The movie is shot in grainy black and white, which from the opening scene telegraphs a mood of nostalgia, fantasy, intimacy and affection. Gordon Willis photographs 1980s midtown Manhattan like the movie-Manhattan of the 1950s. You expect to see Jack Lemmon walking down West 57th Street, but then you notice the Gulf + Western Building, the head shops, the very contemporary presence of litter on the sidewalks. The overlay of eras gets a bit confusing (most of the movie actually seems to take place in the 1960s), but it works. It's both emotionally stirring—you feel you are seeing how modern New York will look someday in memory—and a tip-off to the nonrealistic nature of the story, like a visual "Once upon a time."

Broadway Danny Rose is a show biz fairy tale, its eponymous hero (Allen) a theatrical manager of legendary kindness, decency and haplessness. We learn his story in flashbacks, anecdotes told by a tableful of sagging borscht belt comics one night at the Carnegie Deli. Each of Danny's clients, it seems, is more woebegone than the next—the couple who twist balloons into animal shapes, the hypnotist who can put people into trances but can't wake them up, the woman who plays a xylophone made from glasses of water. Still, he knocks himself out for them, lending them money, encouraging them—"Smile, Strong, Star," he urges them to say to their dressing-room mirrors—and wangling them the odd engagement. His reward? The minute they get a chance at a real break, they desert him for agents with better connections and fewer scruples.

Most of the movie consists of a long

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flashback involving one such client, a pudgy has-been lounge singer named Lou Canova (Nick Apollo Forte), who specializes in ethnic numbers like "Bambina" and "Agita," a comic song about the joys of eating too much Italian food that Forte actually wrote some years ago and that was moderately popular for about fifteen minutes. Thanks to "the nostalgia craze," Danny lands Lou a gig at the Waldorf-Astoria, with hopes of a television appearance if all goes well. But Lou has a big ego, a drinking problem and a mistress; after a week in which Danny has practically moved in with him in order to keep him sane and sober, he refuses to go on unless his girlfriend is there—with Danny as the "beard" so Mrs. C. won't suspect.

Danny's efforts to fetch the tempestuous Tina (Mia Farrow) produce hilarious complications, involving a Mafia garden party, a fortuneteller, a flight from an outraged pair of hit men (even while running for his life Danny stops to leave a tip for the waitress) and a narrow escape from the crumbling warehouse used to store the giant balloons for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. It's all very funny, at moments inspired. But behind the one-liners and surreal touches is a moral contest. Who is right? Tina, with her philosophy of "go for what you want" and screw the next guy, or Danny, with his uncle's message of "forgiveness, acceptance, love"?

It's not really a contest, of course—as in all fairy tales, virtue triumphs over venality. Tina betrays Danny, fixing Lou up with a flashier manager, but her bad conscience gets to her. Eventually she finds her way to Danny's apartment, a dismal hovel that looks like it belongs in a Malamud short story, and apologizes.

Like *Zelig*, *Broadway Danny Rose* is modest, short and sweet tempered. Like *Zelig*, too, it's immensely skilled—I particularly enjoyed Dick Hyman's score, a witty accordion fantasia on "Agita," although it kept that awful tune running through my head for days. Allen, clad in plaid polyester and wearing a *chai* charm around his neck, plays Danny as a kind of nonintellectual, manic version of his usual self, all arm waving and show-business blather instead of edgy quips about *Commentary* and Sartre. Farrow, cast, as they say, against type, is a surprise as Tina, Brooklyn-accented, peroxided, her delicate features hidden behind huge sunglasses and her chest augmented by gigantic falsies. Forte gives Lou a self-knowledge and a self-acceptance that make him more than an overweight flop, gleefully tossing his microphone from hand to sweaty hand. And as in many of Allen's films (remember Marshall McLuhan's wonderful bit in *Annie Hall*), *Broadway Danny Rose* features pleasing cameos by famous people playing themselves—Milton Berle, Howard Cosell, Sandy Baron, Corbett Monica and Joe Franklin.

The movie's intentions are so kind it would be churlish to investigate them too closely. Danny falls into a long line of saintly Jewish schlemiels—he's a kind of Broadway Bontsche Shweig or Gimpel the Fool, refusing to rise to the world's slights or even to acknowledge their existence. It's hard not to notice, though, how differently Allen presents his Jews and Italians (all the characters are one or the other). The Jews are seen from within, hardly reverently but with affection. The tableful of comics are care-worn and streetwise—they grouse about the distances they have to cover between engagements like traveling salesmen pushing an outmoded brand of vacuum cleaner—but they still appreciate Danny's moral worth. Danny's constant spouting of his aunts' and uncles' silly maxims ("you can't ride two horses with one behind") is funny, but not cruel. The Italians, on the other hand, are seen from without. They're vulgar (Tina fumes that Lou was seen at the track with "a cheap blonde," the joke being that *she's* a cheap blonde), superstitious, violent, criminal and stupid.

We know what Danny has to offer Tina—his superior moral code—but what does she have to offer him? There are hints that he needs her crude vitality (her last name, in fact, is Vitale) and go-getter spirit, but they remain just hints. Basically, it's Jews 10, Italians 0. One wouldn't want to make too much of this; if anyone has mined the downside of Jewish-American culture it's Allen. Still, why such a bad rap for the sons of Sicily? as Mia's ex, Frank Sinatra, might say. □

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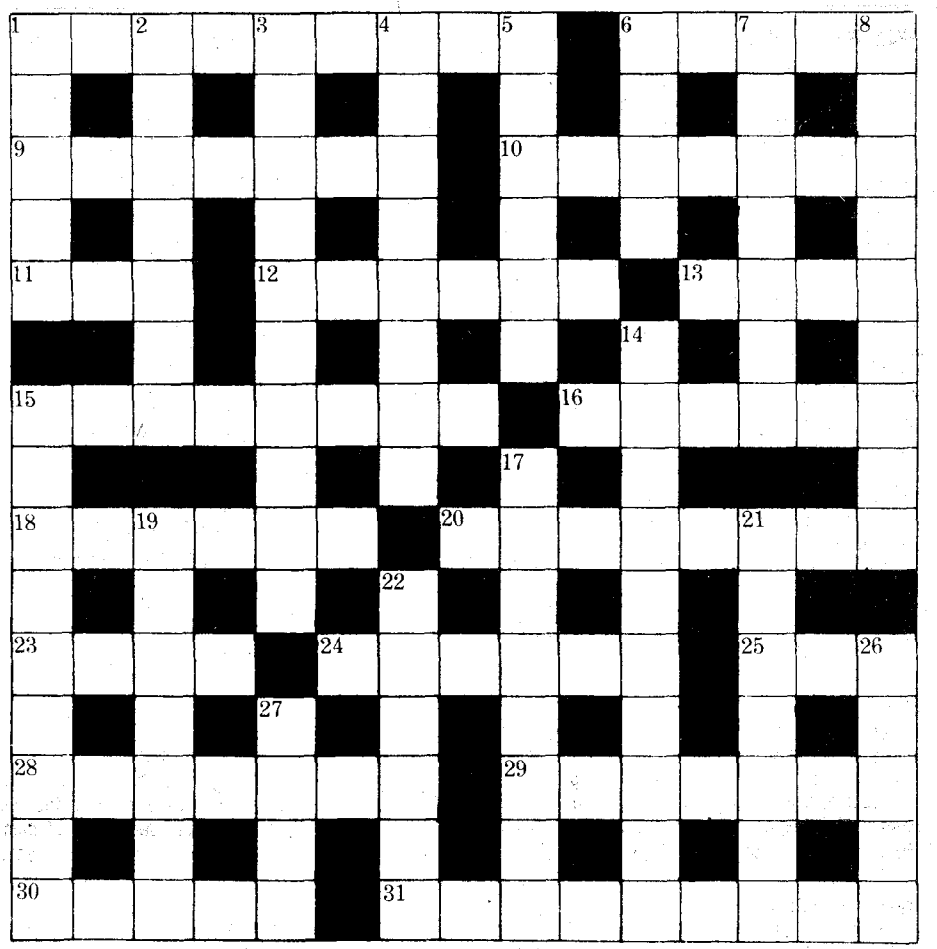
FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 and 15 down Secure the animals, and go along swiftly—it means everything to me! (4,5,3,6)
6 Sat in session around an "indicated something." (5)
9 Not quite elongated like Lear—but that might be telling! (7)
10 Concerning things that rhyme, or just the opposite? (7)
11 Would it be inhuman not to? (3)
12 It might have more than one plane in it. (It sounds as though one might hold your coat for you.) (6)
13 Where the Taj Mahal is like silver to a god? (4)
15 It might indicate where to read a little more—for example, how to inquire about strange rites. (8)
16 His Beatitudes were choral. (6)
18 One might find it a grind to be like the trapeze artists, when in the air. (6)
20 A word of warning to a player? The players, more likely! (It might be concerning the weather.) (8)
23 Most important part of the foot? (4)
24 The diplomatic representative of a woman under vows to a labor organization. (6)
25 Du Maurier wrote this going to Jamaica. (3)
28 A modified verse form portraying a circular city railroad of the old type? (7)
29 and 6 down One straight and one oblique—though it might have made somewhat of a clanking sound. (7,4)
30 The flower that might mean quite a bit to you and me. (5)
31 Had to be like several groups of the sheriff's men at Ed's breakout. (9)

DOWN

1 He gets commonly drunk before being uncommonly supple. (5)
2 One has to take the blame for the beginnings of pride in the dedicated group of admirers. (7)
3 A bad girl is then on the skids. (10)
4 Roasting this might imply a sort of pedal-pusher, at least at one time. (8)
5 Chosen people typified by one? (6)
6 See 29
7 and 8 Wall Street dope? (It wouldn't sell like 17.) (1,4,2,3,6)
14 In a way lit out, free and vitally real. (4,2,4)
15 See 1 across
17 Best sellers, reputedly. (8)
19 The rotten core with a cracked nut? The loser sometimes asks for one. (7)
21 Comes down light as this, perhaps. (7)
22 Rub the wrong way? (Your buddy comes up with something for the bag.) (6)
26 Cyrano was long this and pried into things. (5)
27 Might be five to four, being nothing to one who might work on a canal. (4)

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